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**Perceptions of Teaching Pre-verbal  
Pupils with Autism and Severe  
Learning Difficulties: Factors  
Influencing the Application of  
Intensive Interaction in the Thai  
Culture**

**Rungrat Sri-Amnuay**

**PhD**

**2012**

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Pupils with Autism and Severe  
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Intensive Interaction in the Thai  
Culture**

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**A thesis submitted in partial  
fulfilment of the requirements of the  
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## Abstract

The educational provision for pupils with autism and severe learning difficulties (SLD) in Thailand has struggled. Families and institutions have attempted to seek an alternative pedagogy to improve children's quality of life. This thesis introduces Intensive Interaction, developed by Nind and Hewett (1994, 2005) in the UK and from the western culture, as a new pedagogy to foster the fundamental communication of Thai pupils with autism and SLD. There is a lack of understanding regarding the application of knowledge of how the western intervention would be perceived by practitioners in different cultures. The deep understanding of practitioners' perceptions has facilitated a rethink of educational curriculum development and action to expand the work of Intensive Interaction within the East's pedagogy.

This research explored the perceptions of teaching pre-verbal pupils with autism and SLD, focusing on factors influencing the application of Intensive Interaction in Thai culture. The research addressed the question of how Thai teachers perceive Intensive Interaction as an approach to working with pupils with autism and SLD in the Thai context. In addition, it addressed which key factors in Thai culture influence the adoption of the Intensive Interaction. A two-day Intensive Interaction training course was carried out in Thailand to recruit the participants, and follow-up workshops were arranged for teachers' practice development. Eleven participating teachers (ten women and one man) were drawn from two special education settings and one mainstream school in the northeast region of Thailand. A hermeneutic phenomenological perspective informed by the philosophical tenets of Heidegger (1962) was used to explore the Intensive Interaction experiences of teachers.

Qualitative data were gathered in the form of four in-depth semi-structured interviews from each teacher: the first – before the use of Intensive Interaction with pupils, and the second to fourth – during the Intensive Interaction implementation. Two focus groups of teacher participants were conducted after the end of the Intensive Interaction teaching programme with pupils. Both interviews were in Thai and later transcribed, with some parts being translated into English. Active participant observation was recorded in a field note and research diary throughout the period of data collection to contribute to interpretation and analysis. Thematic analysis methods were developed from the hermeneutic and phenomenological philosophy of Gadamer (1989) and the analysis process was adapted from Titchen and colleagues (1993; 2003) as practical guidance. The analysis of the teachers'

perceptions captured the significance of the Intensive Interaction implementation in a new cultural context, their perceptions of the benefit and challenging aspects of the new pedagogy and the importance of cultural values to the new teaching practice.

Key themes from analysis of the interviews revealed that all teachers perceived Intensive Interaction as a worthwhile approach not only for a positive outcome for pupils, but also for an increased sense of professionalism and confidence for teachers. The data also revealed challenges to its implementation in the Thai culture. These included the role of the Thai teacher, the traditional Thai rigour of controlled-based teaching methods which derive from behavioural principles, the components of Thai culture characterised by a hierarchical structure for interaction and the role of the teacher as a second mother. These fundamentals have made the implementation of a child-focused approach more challenging for Thais.

The implications for practice include rethinking education for future pre-verbal pupils with autism and SLD, in which social-communicative abilities are included as a priority in their educational curriculum. Policies for skills training and knowledge development in the areas of child-centred education are required. The policy maker has to formally address the fundamental philosophy and beliefs about the nature of knowledge and how children learn that are embedded in the preparation course for pre-service special education teachers. This needs to provide them with the appreciation of other educational philosophies and to reposition Thai cultural challenges to a child-focused approach. These approaches are urgently required to enable teacher educators to effectively provide a teacher-training course that shifts practice in line with the education reform intended by the current Thai government.

# Table of Contents

Abstract .....	I
List of Tables and Figures .....	VIII
Acknowledgements.....	X
Declaration .....	XII
Chapter One: Introduction.....	1
Motivation for the Thesis .....	1
Overview of the History and Development of Special Education in Thailand ....	1
Current Issues of Teacher Development for Working with Autism and SLD in Thailand .....	4
Requirements for an Alternative Teaching Approach for Development in Children with Autism and SLD.....	6
Rajabhat Universities and their Roles in Special Education Teacher Development.....	7
My Experiences of Working in Rajabhat Universities.....	8
Motivation to Implement Intensive Interaction in the Thai Context .....	11
Research Aims.....	12
Research Objective.....	14
Structure of the Thesis .....	14
Chapter Two: Intensive Interaction .....	18
Introduction .....	18
Definition .....	18
Theoretical Framework for Intensive Interaction.....	19
History.....	19
Approach based on the Naturalistic Process and Developmental Principles ..	21
Theoretical Development .....	22
Behavioural Approach to Teaching .....	23
Central Features of Intensive Interaction.....	26
Sequences of Intensive Interaction .....	31
Evidence of Effectiveness .....	32
Studies with Children and Adults.....	33
Practitioners' Reflections on the Use of Intensive Interaction .....	34
Caregiver-Infant Interaction in Different Cultural Backgrounds .....	39
Attitude to Development in Children's Play and Culture Difference .....	40
Conclusion .....	46

Chapter Three: Theoretical Framework for Understanding the Possibilities of Thai Culture Influencing Intensive Interaction Implementation .....	48
Introduction .....	48
The Impact of Culture in Innovative Implementation .....	48
The Concept of Culture .....	49
A Study of Cultural Differences .....	58
Hofstede's Framework and its Relevance to Thai National Cultural Values ....	59
Thai High Power Distance .....	62
Thai Collectivism .....	68
Thai Femininity .....	73
Thai High Uncertainty Avoidance .....	76
Thai Long-Term Orientation .....	78
Critique of Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions .....	79
Thai National Culture and Implications for Using an Intensive Interaction Approach .....	81
Gratitude: 'Bunkhun' Relationship .....	82
Religion- Psychological Orientation: 'Karma' .....	85
Face Saving, Criticism Avoidance and Kreng Jai Values .....	86
Interdependence: 'Paeng-pa Ah-sai' .....	88
Fun Pleasure: 'Sanuk' .....	89
Conclusion .....	91
Chapter Four: Research Methodology .....	93
Introduction .....	93
Philosophical Perspectives .....	93
The Interpretative Paradigm .....	96
A Research Methodology .....	98
Phenomenology: Philosophy of Edmund Husserl .....	98
Hermeneutic: Philosophy of Martin Heidegger .....	100
Being and Time: The Principle of an Interpretation .....	103
Hermeneutic Circle: An Interpretative Process .....	107
Conclusion .....	113
Chapter Five: Research Design .....	114
Introduction .....	114
Research Design .....	114
Recruitment Process .....	115
Preparing Training Materials or a Two-day Training Course .....	117

Training Intervention Strategies .....	118
Research Study Participants .....	120
Pupils Participating in the Intensive Interaction Teaching Programme.....	122
Consideration of Ethical Issues .....	123
The Role of the Researcher and the Application of being an Insider .....	127
Developing Educators' Practice during the Period of Data Collection .....	132
School Teaching Visits .....	132
A Half-day Workshop .....	133
Research Methods for Data Collection .....	135
Interviews.....	135
Semi-structured interviews .....	136
Participant Observation .....	138
Research diary.....	140
Focus group Interview .....	141
Data Analysis .....	142
Achieving Rigour and Trustworthiness in Research .....	145
Critical Reflections on Doing My Research in the Thai Context.....	148
Managing the Implementation Process .....	148
Teaching Session and Using Self-Modelling .....	152
Teamwork and the Impact of Thai Hierarchy .....	154
The Cultural Challenge of Exchange Knowledge .....	156
Generalisability from the Research Findings .....	157
Conclusion .....	158
Chapter Six: The Presentation of Perceptions of the Use of Intensive Interaction in Thai Culture .....	159
Introduction .....	159
Theme One: Becoming a Responsive Teacher –The Challenge of the Transition Process .....	161
Attitude to Play in Children's Development and the Culture Imperative: .....	169
The Impact of Play on the Role of Thai Teacher .....	169
Awareness of Social Experiences and Initiated-Communication .....	175
The Interface between the Responsive Process and Objective-based Teaching .....	178
Improvement and Change of Teachers' Teaching Practice .....	191
Theme Two: Encouraging Factors to Intensive Interaction .....	199
Starting from a Sceptical Mind .....	200



Positive Responses from the Pupils .....	201
The Value of Naturalistic Approach .....	211
Motivation from Caregivers .....	216
Theme Three: Perceived Barriers to Intensive Interaction in Thai schools ...	217
Inconsistency in Teaching Opportunities .....	217
Suspicious Looks from Outsiders .....	222
Theme Four: Supporting the Sustainability of Intensive Interaction in the Thai school context .....	226
Conclusion .....	232
Chapter Seven: Discussion.....	235
Introduction .....	235
Becoming a Responsive Teacher: The Challenge of the Transition Process	236
The Role of the Thai Teacher and the Duty of Pupils .....	236
The Role of Attitudes to Play in Children's Development and Cultural Imperative in Implementing Intensive Interaction.....	241
Improving Awareness of Social Experiences and Initiated-Communication as Part of Child Development .....	245
The Interface of Responsive Process and Objective-based Teaching .....	246
Improvement and Change of Teachers' Teaching Practice .....	249
Promoting Factors to Intensive Interaction in the Thai School Context.....	251
Perceived Barriers Perceived to Intensive Interaction in Thai School .....	253
Supporting the Sustainability of Intensive Interaction in the Thai School Context .....	255
Chapter Eight Conclusion .....	259
Answers to the research question .....	259
Contribution to Knowledge .....	263
Implications for Pupil Learning: Action for Special Education Schools.....	265
Implications for Teacher Education: Action for Rajabhat Universities .....	267
Implications for Policy Makers: Action for the Higher Education Commission and Thai Government .....	268
Implication for Research: The strengths and weaknesses of the research design and methods.....	270
Recommendation for further research .....	271
Personal Implication: What have I learnt in the journey of doing my doctoral dissertation? .....	272
References .....	277
Appendices .....	301

Appendix I: Letter of Ethical Approval for Northumbria University Committee. .....	301
Appendix II: 2-Day Intensive Interaction Training Schedule.....	302
Appendix III: Letter Requesting Permission to Conduct Research Study in Nakhon Rachasima Rajabhat University with Thai Version .....	306
Appendix IV: Letter for Allowing to Conduct Research Study in Nakhon Rachasima Rajabhat University with Thai Version .....	308
Appendix V: Invitation Letter for Thai Schools with Thai Version .....	310
Appendix VI: Information Sheet for Thai Teachers with Thai Version .....	312
Appendix VII: Consent Form for Thai Teachers with Thai Version.....	321
Appendix VIII: Information Sheet for Parent with Thai Version .....	325
Appendix IX: Consent Form for Thai Teachers with Thai Version.....	333
Appendix X: Outline of Semi- Structured Interview Schedule: The Baseline Perception.....	338
Appendix XI: Outline of Semi- Structured Interview Schedule: Participants' Perceptions of Using Intensive Interaction Practice during the 6-month Project with Thai Version .....	340
Appendix XII: Outline of the Focus Group Interview Schedule: Participants' Perceptions of Using Intensive Interaction Practice at the End of the 6-month Project with Thai version .....	343
Appendix XIII: Outline of the Observation Schedule.....	347
Appendix XIV: Pictures of Research Sites and Activities Conducted in this Research. ....	349

## List of Tables and Figures

### Tables:

Table 1.1 The history and development of special education in Thailand.....	3-4
Table 2.1 Valued educational goals and practices in cultural context .....	45-46
Table 3.1 The five dimensions of the national cultural framework of Thailand, the United Kingdom and the United States.....	61
Table 3.2 Cultural differences in teacher/student interaction: Low power distance versus high power distance.....	63
Table 3.3 Cultural differences in teacher/student interaction: Individualism versus collectivism.....	68-69
Table 3.4 Cultural differences in teacher/student interaction: Masculinity versus femininity.....	73
Table 3.5 Cultural differences in teacher/student interaction: Low uncertainty avoidance versus high uncertainty avoidance .....	76
Table 5.1 The number of participants in three research sites according to number, sex, seniority and education.....	121-122
Table 5.2 Activities and data collected in this research.....	134
Table 6.1 Themes and sub-themes of the perception of the use of Intensive Interaction .....	160

## Figures:

Figure 3.1 Three levels of uniqueness in human mental programming .....51

Figure 3.2 The “onion”: Manifestations of culture at different levels of depth.....53

Figure 3.3 The iceberg model of culture.....55-56

Figure 3.4 The five dimensions of the national cultural framework of Thailand, the United Kingdom and the United States.....61

Figure 5.1 Presents an overview of the research approach and actions taken in conducting this research.....116

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## Declaration

I declare that the work contained in this thesis is all my own and has not been submitted for any other award. I also confirm that this work fully acknowledges opinions, ideas and contributions from the work of others.

Any ethical clearance for the research presented in this thesis has been approved.

Name: Rungrat Sri-Amnuay

Signature:

Date: 7 June 2012.

# Chapter One: Introduction

## Motivation for the Thesis

This study has its origins in both professional and personal reasons. I have been a lecturer at a university in Thailand for many years, focusing on the area of special education. My particular interest is in the area of teaching children with autism and severe learning difficulty (SLD). I intended to improve the quality of life for pupils with autism and SLD through enhancing teachers' educational practices. In Thailand, special education is a recent subject of study for university students who want to become teachers. Although the existence of special education services for children with special educational needs (SEN) has been evident since 1939 (Roeder, 2001), teacher education for working with children with SEN was actually started at universities in 1997 after the mandate of *The Constitution of Thai Kingdom B.E. 2540 (1997)*, in which many human rights were explicitly acknowledged (Thailand Constitution, 1997). It could be stated that the development of Thai special education teacher training is not yet sufficient, especially in working with the group of children with autism and SLD. The existing teaching methods seem inadequate for teachers to work with and teach this group of pupils effectively. This thesis documents the researched introduction of Intensive Interaction to Thai educationalists and the associated cultural barriers to its application. The following section provides an understanding of the context of the study.

## Overview of the History and Development of Special Education in Thailand

In Thailand, special education services have been evident for many years, for example: in 1939, education programmes were started for students who



experienced blindness; in 1951, for children who were hard of hearing; in 1959, for children with intellectual and developmental disabilities; and in 1961, for children with physical and multiple disabilities (Amatyakul, Tammaaeng, and Punong-ong, 1995 cited in Carter, 2006, p.33; Roeder, 2001). However, many children with disabilities stayed at home with their parents or guardians and were not given any opportunities to study due to the National Primary Education Act of 2478 (1935), and the National Primary Education Act of 2523 (1980), both of which stated that children with disabilities were exempt from compulsory education (Carter, 2006, p.33; EENET, 1997; University Nakhon Rachasima Rajabhat, 2006).

There were two main reasons for this, as Roeder identified in his thesis. Firstly, the public schools throughout the country were unable to provide an education for a child with SEN since the majority of teachers had not received adequate training in teaching and working with a child with SEN, and they were already overburdened with large class sizes (40-45 students per class). Secondly, special schools were often located far away from the family's village and, therefore, the travelling expenses for parents were often unaffordable (Roeder, 2001, chapter 1, p.38).

A movement toward the provision of educational rights to individuals with disabilities began after the World Declaration on Education for All adopted by all UNESCO Member States during the World Conference on Education for All in March, 1990 at Jomtien, Chonburi, Thailand. In compliance with this, *The Rehabilitation of Disabled Persons Act B.E. 2534* was implemented in 1991. The Thai national policies regarding *Education for All* were established in 1995. This policy stated that educational practices were not to be discriminatory (UNESCO,1990).

Since 1997, with the mandate of *The Constitution of Thai Kingdom B.E. 2540 (1997)*, many human rights have been explicitly acknowledged. Namely, section 43 stipulates that “*A person shall enjoy an equal right to receive the fundamental education for the duration of not less than twelve years which shall be provided by the State thoroughly, up to the quality, and without*

*charge*" (Thailand Constitution, 1997). As of 1999, under educational reform, the Royal Thai government supported the provision of education for all with the enactment of *The National Education Act B.E. 2542 (1999, session 10)*.

In 1999, the government announced the "Year of Education for Persons with Disabilities", which clearly confirmed that "*Any disabled person who wishes to go to school, can do so*" (APCD, 2007, p.1). This meant all schools should offer children with disabilities the opportunity to be included in regular education programmes after they were exempt for many years. Practically, however, children with SEN still refused to take part in normal classes, according to the reasons previously mentioned.

In line with these policies, the government of Thailand in 1997 set up six Special Education Centres in Rajabhat Universities across regions around the country, plus 13 Regional Special Education Centres in 1999 and 63 Provincial Special Education Centres in 2003 to cover every province. Due to the rapid expansion of these new centres, the teachers and staff often did not have sufficient training to provide quality services to children with SEN and their families (Seameo, 2003). The summarised history and development of special education in Thailand is shown below.

1935	Primary Education Act: BC 2478 (Inclusive Education, Nakornrachasima)
1980	Primary Education Act: BC 2523 (Khanittha 1997 cited in Murrey,1998) The compulsory education level was set at grade six at the primary school level. *Children with disabilities were exempt from compulsory education.
1990	The Word Conference on Education for All in March, at Jomtien, Chonbury, Thailand: BC 2533
1991	The Rehabilitation of Disabled Persons Act: BC 2534 Set up 6 Special Education Centres in Rajabhat University scattered across regions within country.
1992	The 7th National Plan for Social and Economic Development Raised compulsory education from grade six to grade nine or Matayhon 3 *Children with disabilities were exempt from compulsory education.
1995	The National Policies: Education for All: BC 2538 (2535-2539)

1997	The Constitution of The Thai Kingdom: BC 2540
1999	<p>The National Education Act: BC 2542</p> <p>The "Year of Education for Persons with Disabilities", which clearly confirms that "Any disabled persons who wishes to go to school, can do so".</p> <p>Set up 13 Regional Special Education Centres in 1999.</p> <p>Set up 63 Provincial Special Education Centres in 2003 to cover all the provinces in the country.</p>

**Table 1.1: The History and Development of Special Education in Thailand**

It is important to note that, while there have been countrywide educational programmes for students with SEN since 1939, education for these students has only taken root in the past ten to fifteen years. The introduction of educational policy regarding children with SEN appears to be at a rapid pace, whilst the progress of actual implementation and the quality improvement of the special education services in Thailand have tended to be slow.

To reach the policy goal, the government has recognised that teacher training with the appropriate approach is necessary. Training programmes for in-service teachers have been offered to teachers both in general and special education settings around the country. However, training topics, such as early intervention, characteristics of children with disabilities, behavioural management and instructional approach were frequently presented by medical and university personnel, and did not fulfil the teachers' knowledge needs. They still felt they had insufficient knowledge and no confidence to teach students with SEN (Seameo, 2003).

### **Current Issues of Teacher Development for Working with Autism and SLD in Thailand**

The issue of learning and teaching this group of children in Thailand raises concerns amongst parents, teachers and other involved parties. This is because of the sharply-increasing number of children identified as having

autism. This was illustrated by a survey which began in 1999 and showed the total figure of children with autism had risen from 1,375 to 3,779 over a five-year period leading up to 2004 (Ministry of Education of Thailand, 2003 and 2004 cited in Chonlathanon, 2004). Recently, in 2009, this number had informally risen up to 500,000 (manager newspaper). Despite the vastly increasing number of pupils with autism and the greater need of experienced teachers to teach them, the knowledge and teaching approaches of these teachers are inadequate to meet the pupils' demands.

Generally, the current existing teaching methods for children with SEN in Thailand are delivered by Rajabhat Universities. The teaching approaches widely used in practice are Tradition Teaching and Applied Behavioural Analysis. Tradition teaching applies the same methods as those used with children with normal development in primary school, but they are taught more slowly and repeatedly. The units of study such as mathematics, literacy and arts are set as the subject for each teaching session.

Applied Behavioural Analysis (ABA) encourages new behaviours in students by developing tailored tasks and offering reinforcement. This method is the most popular for children with autism and SLD. In Thailand, the Individual Education Programme (IEP) is the curriculum for students with autism and SLD and is required when granting financial supports from the government. It is based on the behavioural objectives model where the skills and bodies of knowledge are broken down into small steps. The debate about this method focuses less on supporting children's intrinsic development and on providing meaningful learning opportunities appropriate to their developmental level.

Other sources of teaching approaches in Thailand, such as TEACCH, are provided by voluntary organisations, for example, from the United Kingdom, United States, Australia and Japan. The latest practice is Floor Time, introduced by a group of physicians. TEACCH stands for the Treatment and Education of Autistic and related Communication-handicapped Children. It uses a visual structure and organisation to assist students with autism to focus on their tasks. This approach is based on the principles of structured

teaching and aims to use the child's visual strengths and a repetitive structure to help them understand the lessons.

Floor Time, the latest teaching approach for children with autism, has received great attention from a group of parents of children with autism in Thailand. Floor Time originated in the United States and has been adopted by a group of physicians and speech therapists in Mahidol University who treat children with autism in hospital. Presently, this approach is being researched for its effectiveness and is being promoted to parents and staff who work with students with autism. The reason for adopting Floor Time started with parents of children with autism who were not satisfied with the ABA teaching approach and felt that their children were still different from others. In Thailand, books of Floor Time were written by parents of children with autism. The course and meetings were held by physicians, groups of parents and teachers involved with children with autism. Issues were raised around this approach as some parents and teachers are not able to make a connection with children with severe autism and have high social isolation in order to engage them in play. Potential solutions to these issues were offered by doctors who suggested increasing access to these children, which is very similar to the Intensive Interaction approach.

### **Requirements for an Alternative Teaching Approach for Development in Children with Autism and SLD**

There are many reports that teachers are not appropriately trained with teaching skills for students, such as those with autism, and therefore they feel unprepared to teach such students (APCD, Thailand, 2007; Utairatanakit, 2002). Utairatanakit (2002, p.9) reported that *"In Thailand, there was no special education training programme for the prospective teachers to work with students with autism"*. Similarly, Chonlathanon (2004) mentioned that, in Thailand, there is no appropriate curriculum or teaching method guidance to support teachers to effectively teach individuals with autism. Lastly, Sukumpun Paribatra, the Governor of Bangkok (2009), stated

that there are two current problems: that teachers and staff in general schools have no knowledge and experience in working with pupils with autism, and it is necessary to provide training to enhance their knowledge and skills in the near future.

Culturally, there is a group of children with autism and SLD who cannot be accessed with the existing teaching approach. It could be said, therefore, that there is the need to seek alternative teaching approaches to develop teacher education in order to work with this group of children with autism and SLD.

## **Rajabhat Universities and their Roles in Special Education**

### **Teacher Development**

In Thailand, there are approximately 126 universities around the country; only six of them offer bachelor degree programmes in special education (Office of the Higher Education Commission, 2011). The six universities, situated in every region of the country, are: 1) Suan Dusit Rajabhat University, 2) Chiangmai Rajabhat University, 3) Maha Sarakham Rajabhat University, 4) Songkhla Rajabhat University, 5) Pibulsongkram Rajabhat University and 6) Nakhon Ratchasima Rajabhat University (more details on the Thai map). These Rajabhat universities all have special education centres within the campuses, each set up by the government since 1997 as mentioned previously. The main goals of these six special education centres are: to be the demonstration schools to support undergraduate education of special education teacher-students, to be the learning resource to conduct research, and to provide special education services to the community. These Rajabhat Universities previously used to work as a group to produce special education graduates and use the same curriculum and textbooks, but now they work separately as single organisations.

Besides offering the bachelor degree in special education, all six universities arrange a one-year post-graduate degree in the same field for qualified

teachers sponsored by the Thai government scholarship. Almost all special education teachers graduate from these six Rajabhat Universities. These universities have, therefore, the key responsibility to improve teachers' development in line with government policy to advance education for children with SEN.

### **My Experiences of Working in Rajabhat Universities**

After completing my study in my special education master's degree, I worked as a lecturer in a Rajabhat University, situated in the southern part of Thailand. Overall, there were approximately 12 teachers, including me, who earned a postgraduate degree in special education from abroad, funded by the government. All of them worked in the six Rajabhat Universities. In my workplace, I chose to have an office on the ground floor in the special education centre building where the classroom for pupils with SEN was located. There, I had the opportunity to observe the teaching of teachers, have conversations and enjoy lunch with them. Also, I always had an opportunity to play with children with autism who loved to come into my office.

From this vantage point, I noticed that teachers faced a difficulty in teaching pupils with autism and SLD. Mostly they had been trained in how to teach pupils with deafness, blindness, and intellectual disability from lecturers who were only familiar with these issues. The only teaching method that they had recourse to was the teacher-directed approach for teaching pre-academic subjects. In my opinion, the need for an early intervention focused mainly on the social and communication abilities of this group of pupils was evident. However, the awareness of the value in teaching social and communication abilities is overlooked in Thai teacher education and the development for this group of pupils is in training gross and fine motor skills, such as self-help skills and pre-academic subjects, for example matching numbers, counting and quantity, colours and the alphabet. These are the main subjects taught in special education in order to prepare pupils for the next stage in *inclusive* education.

From my experience, social and communication competences are not seriously considered a matter for teaching, but only an interaction by chance from pupils' routines, which teachers did not intend to develop. In the first year of my new career, I stood at the open door in front of my office looking at a young teacher who was trying very hard to teach the green colour by holding green and red cards (for the pupil to choose) and walking alongside a boy with severe autism and SLD who mostly kept walking and never allowed anyone to come near him. He never stopped to speak with anyone or allowed anyone to hug him, and he kept saying "*do not touch the electricity plug, dangerous, dangerous*". This teacher tried to teach a pre-academic lesson with him and would be very pleased with any engagement, even though he would forget all about it the next day. Many years have passed, and he has grown up and left school without building a connection with anyone. No-one could make him happy.

In Thai special schools, the subject-objective-based method (more details are discussed in chapter two) has dominated the teaching of pupils with SEN. I was the one who delivered this teaching technique to pre-service and in-service teachers on how to write Individual Educational Programmes (IEP) and Individual Instruction Plans (IIP), based on the objective-behaviourist stance and aiming to teach each skills, including communication skills, for our pupils. All my knowledge of teaching students with SEN accumulated when I was an undergraduate student and became familiar with Skinner's theory and Thai textbooks about Behaviour Modification, the popular and only approach at that time. Whilst this approach is suitable for some circumstances, there needed to be alternative ways to choose to support different learning needs. Some teachers in school must spend much time writing IEP and IIP and this denies them the time or chance to know their pupils better. When pupils were truanting, crying, screaming or walking out of the room, teachers would use negative reinforcement to correct their behaviours. While those behaviours occurred, pupils would not be comforted because of fear of repeated reoccurrence in their behaviours.



Although I used the ABA principle to teach teacher students, I loved playing and comforting pupils with SEN and disliked treating them with the control style of ABA. These feelings increased when I had a baby of my own. Becoming a mother enhanced the feeling of love, sympathy and enjoyment in having fun with the children. I also truly understood the words that some Thai schools use as their school slogan: *"children are all the heart of parents"*. After many years passed, I moved to work in another Rajabhat university in the north. There, I still saw the same scenario as my old workplace. At the new workplace, my office was on the second floor where all the rooms are lecturers' offices. I did not play with pupils with SEN, or have conversations or lunch with them. I rarely had any relationship with a single teacher here. Noticeably, the culture at this university was quite different from the old university I worked for in the south. Here, there appeared to be separation amongst the groups according to status and position in a more rigid manner than the old university. The seniority system there was also stronger. Power and hierarchical social relations are seen as usual: students to teachers; teachers to lecturers; junior lecturers to senior lecturers.

One day I heard someone tell a new young teacher, *"Don't play with them, train them. Playing too much makes a student learn nothing"*. This sentence reminded me of working at the old university. I liked spending time playing with pupils with SEN. One of my favourites was a 7-year-old boy diagnosed with autism. He had a lovely face and smiled all the time even when he was hurt. He could tell what day people were born right after he knew the year and the date of birth. He liked numbers and was good at maths, having a special method even though no-one knew where his skills came from. I loved spending time playing with him, although he allowed me only a little time. Not long after that, I built a good relationship with him and started teaching him maths in an enjoyable manner and played at the same time. One day, I heard a senior lecturer speaking about me, stating that I should not play with him; I should have taught him more than what I had. Playing was only wasting time. Although I think I am right, I cannot teach him without a good relationship, and this was built up through spending time playing with him, I

did not explain anything and still kept quiet and played less with him until I moved.

What happened disturbed me. For many years, I did not offer others teaching approaches. We focused on learning the theory of ABA and objective-based teaching methods and assessed the outcomes. The curriculum in this academic area across the country is dominant in the psychology field, which adheres to ABA as a main learning theory for all groups of students with SEN, including teaching communication and language. Books in the Thai language regarding the special education subject are very rare. As Roeder (2001) mentioned, there were only 20 Thai books in this area.

I had worked at the new university for a couple of years before continuing my study in the UK. What I wanted to study was an exploration for a new teaching approach suitable for pupils with autism and SLD, an approach which incorporated the notion of play as communication and fundamental for child development.

## **Motivation to Implement Intensive Interaction in the Thai Context**

The group of pupils with autism and SLD is my main concern both for academic reasons and my own passion in seeking a new teaching approach in order to connect with these students. At the early stage of this study I looked for new ways of pedagogy but paid special attention to the approach of Intensive Interaction. Reasons for this are, firstly, Intensive Interaction is an approach for teaching the pre-speech fundamentals of communication to children who have SLD and/or autism through interactive play. Secondly, a teaching style emphasizing a child-directed educational model is in accordance with the new direction of the Thai national education reform (National Education Act, 1999: Session 24, p. 12), which states that in organizing the learning process, educational Institutions shall include the provision of *“substance and arrange activities in line with the learners’*

*interests and aptitudes, bearing in mind individual differences”.*

Initially, I intended to do experimental research on teaching pupils with Intensive Interaction, but this approach has been researched in various countries as having beneficial effects on students with SLD and/or autism, including increasing the ability to initiate and maintain social contact and improve pre-verbal communication skills amongst children with SLD (Nind, 1996a, Watson and Fisher, 1997; Kellett 2000) and children with autism (Knott, 1998; Taylor and Taylor, 1998). I then moved to consider the particular cultural setting of introducing Intensive Interaction to a group of Thai teachers to investigate how this approach affects learning and teaching between these teachers and their pupils. I am looking at how Intensive Interaction will be implemented in the Thai context.

In utilising the approach in a country with a different culture, it is necessary to investigate whether there are differences in the way people perceive and interact with children with learning difficulties compared with other cultures. The development of Intensive Interaction has its origin in the United Kingdom and its theoretical framework has been developed from the pattern of caregiver-infant interaction based on Euro-American cultural origins (Nind and Hewett, 2005, p.33-35). The evidence-base of its effectiveness was within the Western populations and practitioners.

## **Research Aims**

The purpose of this study was to analyse the role of the Thai cultural context in the implementation of Intensive Interaction in order to explore the meanings that are involved in the teacher's teaching experiences in Intensive Interaction under the Thai culture, and how this differs from Euro-American culture. This thesis explores the positive factors that promote Intensive Interaction and the factors that might negatively affect the abilities of Intensive Interaction to be used in the Thai context. The overall aim was to understand the experiences of Thai teachers as they adopted a new

pedagogy in order to develop the approach as an effective pedagogy that is compatible with Thailand and takes Eastern culture into account.

This study focuses on the teaching experiences of a group of Thai teachers when introduced to an unfamiliar pedagogy - Intensive Interaction. The study starts from the introduction of the new teaching approach of Intensive Interaction to a group of teachers in Thailand, monitors and supports the teachers during the use of a new innovation and then investigates the contextual impacts that the teachers have in their experiences of Intensive Interaction implementation. The research presents the subjective experiences, opinions, and concerns from the teachers' viewpoint across cultures that affect the way they view Intensive Interaction and proposes guidelines to develop these factors.

The research focused on understanding the effects and implementation issues of the intervention, rather than assessing levels of educational achievement of pupils in the teaching programme. This study does not assess the efficacy or success of Intensive Interaction teaching approaches for teaching Thai pupils with autism and SLD, and therefore does not set out to force a change in the current characteristics of teacher-pupil interactions to absolutely match the model of Intensive Interaction, which is strongly based on the mother-infant interaction of Western assumptions. Rather, the study aims to encourage teachers to engage with their pupils with the principles of Intensive Interaction that could adjust according to the comfortable feelings of Thai teachers in their circumstances.

The instructional culture in Thailand has a strong tradition of teacher-centredness, but new pedagogy and the present educational policy has shifted to student-focused learning approaches. This focus on a student-centred learning style is quite hard for Thai teachers to manage in a class of normal developing pupils, and may be harder to arrange for pupils with autism and SLD. Also, their lack of knowledge, training and experience in the new educational direction may be an obstacle to such an approach. The absolute and immediate changes from teacher-directed teaching to student-

directed teaching has resulted in implementation difficulties due to resistance by teachers to accept or change teaching strategies to meet the needs of children with SEN (Carter, 2006, p. 33; EENET, 1997). Consequently, the aim of this study is the development of an appropriate direction which gains participation from teachers and minimises the resistance of a new unfamiliar innovation and the undesirable outcomes of importing the mother-infant interaction intervention to the different culture of the eastern world (McCollum et al., 2000).

## Research Objective

The objectives were to explore:

- How Thai teachers perceive Intensive Interaction as an approach to work with pupils with autism and SLD in the Thai context.
- What are the key factors in Thai culture that influence the adoption of the Intensive Interaction?
- What factors encourage or discourage the use of the Intensive Interaction approach in the Thai school context.
- What actions are needed for Intensive Interaction to be more compatible with Thai teachers and their schools?

## Structure of the Thesis

**This thesis is organised into eight chapters:**

**Chapter One:** introduces my motivation and rationale of the thesis followed by a brief description of the general background, research aims and questions of the research.

**Chapter Two:** provides the definition of Intensive Interaction, the history of theoretical development and discusses its framework based on a naturalistic approach. The chapter discusses the behavioural approach to teaching and also describes central features and sequences of Intensive Interaction, as well as providing the evidence of its effectiveness. It also discusses the caregiver-infant interaction in different cultural backgrounds and attitudes to development in children's play and cultural difference.

**Chapter Three:** explores and discusses definitions of culture. Then, a review of the deep meaning of culture is investigated by examining characteristics and dimensions of the national culture in Thailand. The chapter addresses how cultural understandings hold the possibilities to affect individual behaviours. It considers how the cultural framework in a country where the beliefs, attitudes, behaviour and desired characteristics of children in society differ from the origins of Intensive Interaction that may have an impact on its implementation.

**Chapter Four:** justifies an appropriate methodology and method for my research inquiry. It first presents my philosophical perspective and position, which endorses my ontological and epistemological stances and locates my research exploration within the interpretative paradigm. Next, an in-depth exploration of phenomenology is discussed, alongside the way in which Heideggerian Hermeneutic phenomenology was adopted to gain insights into the teachers' perceptions and to provide their descriptive and interpretive account.

**Chapter Five:** provides a discussion of the research design. It first describes the method of selecting and accessing teacher participants, and the training intervention strategies. Ethical considerations are described in the process of conducting the research. I position my role of researcher as insider learner for supporting and developing teachers and learning with them, with a balance to be an outsider expert to understand their new social world. The chapter then explains the process of developing teachers' practice and moves to the discussion of the method for collecting data, which comprises repeated semi-structured in-depth interviews, active participant observations

and focus-group interviews. The process of data analysis, a consideration of the trustworthiness of the study and critical reflections on doing my research in the Thai context are provided.

**Chapter Six:** This chapter presents the four major themes. Theme one focuses on becoming a responsive teacher that challenges the transition process. It describes the impact of Thai culture on Intensive Interaction adoption: the role of the teacher and duty of pupils, the role of attitudes to play in children's development and the impact of play on the role of teacher, awareness of social experiences and initiated-communication, the interface of responsive process and objective-based teaching, and the improvement and change of teachers' teaching practice. Theme two refers to what encouraged and motivated Thai teachers to continue doing Intensive Interaction. This includes positive responses from the pupils, the value of a naturalistic approach such as the human nature, fun and versatility, and motivation from caregivers. Theme three identifies the barriers that teachers perceived when they adopted Intensive Interaction into their teaching practice in the classroom. It included the inconsistency in teaching opportunities and suspicious looks from outsiders. Theme four suggests the factors that support the sustenance of Intensive Interaction to be in the Thai school context. It comprises the structuring of Intensive Interaction in school or addressing it in pupils' IEPs, teacher training, parent training and resources.

**Chapter Seven:** discusses the findings of the study by comparing, contrasting and exploring the connection between the key themes to the existing body of literature. Researching the introduction of Intensive Interaction in Thailand has revealed the fundamental role of the cultural setting as both enabler and barrier to the uptake of this practice. It has revealed the extent to which practitioners experienced a cultural transition process of changing their traditional pedagogy when implementing Intensive Interaction, a practice that holds new knowledge, practice understandings, and perspectives and how this has not been well reflected in the current body of literature.

**Chapter Eight:** restates my motivation and rationale of the thesis followed by answering the research questions and describing the supporting aspects to gain success to utilise Intensive Interaction in Thailand. This includes the application of Thai cultural characteristics that support Intensive Interaction, such as using hierarchical social structures, Kreng Jai values, collective features and the value of fun. The power of Intensive Interaction, such as human nature, fun and versatility, and support from the school directors following the policy of child-centred learning already addressed in Thai educational reform system played a role. The chapter outlines the new contribution to knowledge that the thesis has added to the area of work, the implications for pupil learning, for teacher education and for policymaking and for further research. What I learnt in the journey of doing my doctoral dissertation is presented at the end.



## Chapter Two: Intensive Interaction

### Introduction

Chapter one described my motivation for choosing to research this thesis topic and provided overviews of the literature supporting the topic to set the scene for the thesis. This chapter provides a review of research and literature of Intensive Interaction. Firstly, it provides a definition of Intensive Interaction, the history of its theoretical development and discusses its framework based on a naturalistic approach. The chapter then discusses the behavioural approach to teaching and moves on to describe the central features and sequences of Intensive Interaction, as well as providing evidence of its effectiveness. Finally, the chapter discusses the caregiver-infant interaction and the differences of cultural background and attitude to development in children's play, with a particular focus on cultural difference.

### Definition

Intensive Interaction is an interactive or holistic teaching approach which aims to facilitate the abilities of fundamental social interaction and communication, and the cognitive and emotional well-being of children and adults with severe and complex learning difficulties who are remote and withdrawn and who experience difficulties relating to others (Nind and Hewett 1994, 2005). Intensive Interaction adopts the principle of 'motherese' or the model of caregiver-infant interaction in the first year and uses the implicit pedagogical style which characterises playful interactive processes. It is a 'subtle transactional process' *"in which the teacher continuously uses her/his abilities to observe, reflect and act with judgment, based on a set of guiding principles"* (Nind and Thomas 2005, p. 98). The teaching style of Intensive

Interaction is non-intrusive, gentle and respectful, and emphasises a learner-centred educational model.

## **Theoretical Framework for Intensive Interaction**

### **History**

Intensive Interaction originated in the UK during the late 1980s. It was greatly influenced by the ideas of using ‘augmented mothering’ put forward by Ephraim (1979), a psychologist who worked with people with profound difficulties on developing their social and communication abilities. Intensive Interaction has been subsequently developed by Nind and Hewett (1994, 2005), who are now regarded as leading theorists on this pedagogy. Nind and Hewett were aware that many students with severe or profound learning difficulties are at a pre-verbal stage of development and recognised that their priority need is to develop the earliest social and communicative abilities. They believed that if these fundamental abilities were well established the other developmental areas would be developed more easily. Their experiences of teaching students with SLD and complex needs made them recognise that the behavioural approach, widely used in their special school, was not adequate to foster the complexities of social and communication abilities and to support the fundamental learning needs or real understanding of their students with SLD (Nind and Hewett, 2005).

Influenced by Ephraim’s (1979) work on ‘augmented mothering’, Nind and Hewett moved towards the fundamental psychological literature of early caregiver-infant interaction based in Euro-American cultural origins and used these theoretical foundations as guiding principles in the development of Intensive Interaction. They found, from much of the literatures, that the sequences in interactive play between caregivers and their infants in a natural model is the core process for promoting the social and communication abilities (Nind and Hewett 2005).

From reviewing the literature, I also found that the research on caregiver-infant interaction in the first year has been well documented in psychological research which suggests that it helps the infant learn and practice social, communication, language and cognitive skills (Ainsworth and Bell, 1974; Bruner, 1975; Collis, 1978; Stern, Beebe, Jaffe, and Bennett, 1977). Additionally, forms of interaction between parents and children that appear to influence the development of children's autonomy are more supportive of the constructivist theory of child's learning and development, compared to that of behavioural theory (Crockenberg et al., 1996). Over two decades many authors have strongly suggested using the model of caregiver-infant interaction as a guide for an effective approach to early intervention strategies, including Bromwick (1980), Mahoney and Wheeden (1997), and Rossetti (2001). The key elements of optimum caregiver-infant interaction to facilitate social and communicative ability were firmly rooted in mutual pleasure, contingent response and reciprocity, synchronised rhythms, imitation, turn taking, intentionality, and modification of interpersonal behaviour.

Although informed by knowledge about the nature of early caregiver-infant interaction, Intensive Interaction does not intend to treat pupils like babies (Nind, 1999, p.97), or to 're-parent' (Kellett and Nind, 2003). This teaching approach places interactive games at the centre of the 'curriculum' in which the teacher pays attention to the elements of planning, monitoring and reflection in a pedagogical way. This facilitates structure and progression to be built into the teaching approach and makes it different from the intuitive approach in parenting (Kellett and Nind, 2003; Samuel, Nind, Volans Scriven, 2008). The naturalistic approach of Intensive Interaction focuses on procedure where the interaction is similar to the 'natural' interactions between caregivers and infants (Nind, 1999). Intensive Interaction recognises the importance of respecting the learners' chronological age and "gives them the best possible opportunity to develop and to facilitate the best level of communication they are capable of" (Watson and Knight, 1991).

Nind (1999) has distinguished clearly between the interactive approach of Intensive Interaction and that of many early interventions because, rather than planning for creating specific interactive behaviours, Intensive Interaction demands teachers take on 'a whole, nurturing, facilitative and problem-solving framework for interaction' (Nind, 1999, p.97). The framework of the Interactive approach is derived from cognitive psychology which pays attention to understanding the development of thinking (Collis and Lacey, 1996, p.3). This framework does not present 'a series of techniques' to be followed, but rather a series of ideas that are intended to cause the teacher to question how they teach (Collis and Lacey, 1996, p. 2). Thus, the approach is not to follow 'a set formula from a special manual'. Rather, Intensive Interaction is a 'subtle transactional process' in which the teacher employs her/his reflective abilities and 'collaborative problem-solving' to change the 'implicit pedagogy' into an interactive style that becomes the method and content of the teaching approach (Nind and Thomas, 2005, p. 98).

### **Approach based on the Naturalistic Process and Developmental Principles**

The theoretical framework of Intensive Interaction is based on the naturalistic processes and developmental principles of caregiver–infant interaction. Its strength is that it is consistent with a strong foundation in the science of communication and language development. A second strength of the developmental approach is teaching communication in natural functions and social interactions which are readily delivered in natural environments and by a variety of adults (Charman and Stone, 2006). As it is built from the model of language development in typically developing infant and toddlers, Intensive Interaction is open to questions of how to move children with autism through this normal developmental sequence. Nind (1999) is aware of the issue being discussed in many studies that consider autism an 'innate inability' to learn from natural interactive process and has provided evidence

of positive outcomes of autism in effective communicative learning from the natural interactive process of Intensive Interaction.

## Theoretical Development

Intensive Interaction is evidence-based practice. The principle effectiveness of Intensive Interaction was evaluated by Melanie Nind (1992) in her doctoral thesis on teaching six people aged 27-36 from a long-stay hospital and part time students at the hospital school. These people had severe developmental disabilities, ritualistic behaviours and were socially isolated. After a 'base-line phase' of up to six months, daily Intensive Interaction was used in an intervention phase of between 12 and 18 months. The students' behaviour change was measured using specially constructed observation schedules, video analysis, Kieran and Reid's (1987) *Pre-Verbal Communication Schedule* and an adaptation of Brazelton's (1984) *Cuddliness Scale*. The findings of Nind's thesis demonstrated that all the students demonstrated higher scores on the measurement. The development were made in social-communicative abilities in all six students, such as looking at the teacher's face, making eye contact, showing happy facial expressions and making vocalisations. In addition, there was a development towards decreased ritualistic behaviour. Nind's doctoral thesis was summarized in a journal article (Nind, 1996). Dave Hewett (1995) wrote about the methodology of Intensive Interaction in his doctoral thesis using qualitative evaluation methods for teaching five learners with SLD in a pre-verbal stage of development. A teaching approach was studied over a period of 18 months in order to identify and understand the teachers' teaching techniques. Hewett suggested the need to accept a combination of rational and intuitive teacher knowledge as Intensive Interaction teaching employs this mixture of rational and intuitive decision-making processes on the part of the teacher. This was radically different from other models for working with children with autism and SLD, for instance the Lovaas model, which employed behaviourist approaches to educating children.

## Behavioural Approach to Teaching

During the 1970s, O Ivar Lovaas (1966) introduced discrete trial training based on Skinner's behavioural principle for teaching language to non-verbal children with autism (Smith, 1989). Behaviourism is a theory of animal and human learning that emphasizes the changes in observable, external behaviours. This theory followed B.F. Skinner's idea in the book *Verbal Behaviour* (1957), that learning is a new behaviour that takes place as a result of selected and shaped reinforcement. Skinner's notion using of 'external factors' as an explanation of language learning theory was criticised by Chomsky (1959) for being too simple. He argued that emphasising the role of 'stimulus', 'response', and 'reinforcement' ignored the internal structure of children's language acquisition which Chomsky highlighted as the fundamental device. The simple principle of stimulus-respond-reinforcement associations in shaping verbal behaviour was refused in that it could not adequately explain how children can rapidly acquire language in the complex interaction of their lives.

The behavioural approach uses a highly structured pre-planned programme, and focuses on objective-based or task-centred activities and on passing knowledge from teachers to students. The technique involves strategies for breaking down complex skills into sub-smaller skills or task analysis and each small skill being taught through highly adult-structured and child compliant structures. The rationale of Lovaas' (1977; 1981 cited in Smith, 1989) work was that people with autism would not learn enough in the natural environment. Learning situations consist with constantly didactic approaches to a learner's response by imitating the teacher's model with verbal request through the use of explicit prompting, shaping and reinforcement techniques.

Although the positive results of the behavioural programme studies were extensively reported, since the mid-1980s the concern with this technique has increased. Many practitioners and researchers questioned the use of this

strategy in training in all kinds of abilities, including the development of communication and language, for example McConkey, 1981; Smith, Moore and Phillips, 1983; and Hewett and Nind, 1988. The concerns of the behaviourist technique included the problem of generalisation to independent use in natural interaction. This has been seen as a possibly result from the continual breaking down of skills into sub-smaller skills of task analysis techniques leading to a removal of the complexity of behaviour (Ballard, 1987; Wood and Shears, 1986) or from language teaching in behavioural practice, which tends to limit the opportunities for conversational exchange and true communication. The learner is required to produce a predetermined verbal response and thus it tends to fail in the maintenance of communication (Coupe O'Kane and Goldbart, 1998, p. 28; Goldbart, 1988, p. 66).

Keeping children 'on task' also may hinder their spontaneity because children's initiating behaviour would be seen as 'off-task' responding (Bray, Macarthur, and Ballard, 1988, p. 212 citing many authors). The high teacher-controlled instructional activity has been criticized for leading to limitations or failures of transferring those skills to non-teaching situations (Spradlin and Siegel, 1982, cited in Ballard, 1987 and Bray et al., 1988). Moreover, adult-child interactions in behavioural approaches have been considered as placing a learner in a passive role; the pupils tend to have little opportunity to initiate, share power or control over the teaching interactions (Bray, et al., 1988; Smith, et al., 1983). The direction of inflexible teaching interaction discourages initiation, spontaneity in communication and learning by placing a child into a respondent role (Ballard, 1987) and the learner may become dependent on what is prompted (Prizant and Wetherby, 1998).

The behavioural objective model has been concerned with emphasising what is taught rather than what is learnt. This technique could thus 'degrade' the learner, the teacher and the learning process (Billinge, 1988). This model considerably underestimates the ability of teachers to structure the learning experiences of pupils and the ability of pupils to learn in an active interaction, shaping their own curriculum (Billinge, 1988). The approach to teaching

seems not to value the unique characteristics of either the child or the teacher, or the relationship between teacher and child that can develop through interaction (Ballard, 1987). Meanwhile, the heavy emphasis on maintaining pre-planned tasks has the effect of discouraging teachers' responses to pupils' initiations (Smith et al., 1983). It seems that this way of teaching does not support the task of teaching which aims to support and extend pupils' powers in an environment (Billings, 1988). Consequently, behavioural teaching techniques have not been viewed as promoting real learning or real understanding and 'education' (McConkey, 1981; Smith et al., 1983). The nature of its reduction tends to lead to over-simplification (Bruner, 1981) which lacks sensible thinking about the aims of education (Nind and Thomas, 2005).

By concentrating almost exclusively on objective-based teaching, it is a denial of the complexity of the learning process which may extend beyond overt behaviours and task analysis (Ballard, 1987). The teaching procedure tends to impose teacher's understanding on children with little opportunity to develop their own understanding. It is important that the knowledge constructed from an understanding through the process of teaching involves a mental structure which is retained better and has much wider transfer and application (McConkey, 1981). In the behavioural objective teaching, communicative skills are taught isolated from social interaction or social context in which it is seen as a necessary component for the learning process of communication. Language development occurs in the social context of communication (Bruner, 1981). An intervention should thus be directed at supporting social interaction process rather than attempting to reduce them through direct instruction in which the learning outcome is specified in advance (Bruner, 1975; Harris, 1988).

At present, Skinner's theory of language acquisition seems to have received less attention (Cattle, 2000). Whilst retaining this approach, Farrell (1991) said that the structured objectives-based teaching of a behavioural approach may be most inappropriate when teaching language and communication, and has attempted to complement behavioural and interactive approaches with



each other. Presently some traditional behaviourists in the US, such as Kogel, Prizant and Wetheby, see the need to move from traditional behavioural approaches to language and communication in autism because they recognise some of the weakness in the traditional work (generalisation) and prefer a more child-centred approach or naturalistic approaches to language intervention.

This section critiques the limitations of behavioural approaches to teaching which use highly structured, teacher-controlled approaches with a focus on objective-based teaching. Next, the section describes the central features of Intensive Interaction and the evidence of its effectiveness.

### **Central Features of Intensive Interaction**

Nind (1996, p. 50) briefly defined five central features of the interactive style in Intensive Interaction as follows:

- The teachers create mutual pleasure and interactive games, trying to engage pupils in activity with the aim of enjoying each other.
- The teachers adjust their interpersonal behaviours such as facial expression, posture and proximity, motherese (higher pitch, greater sing-song) in order to become more engaging and meaningful.
- Interactions flowing in time: with pauses, repetitions and blended rhythms.
- The teachers use intentionality: responding to the pupil's behaviours as if they were initiations with communicative significance.
- The teachers use contingent responding that follows the pupils' lead rather than directing them, celebrating and imitating, and giving power to their experiment, cause and effect.

A central feature of the principles of Intensive Interaction is the quality of the interactive process between teacher and pupil where there is no pre-selected objective or desired outcome focus and no didactic teaching. Nind (1999)

explained that the absence of pre-selected objectives means that what happens in interaction is not decided as *right* or *wrong* concepts. The interactive learning highlights the most positive context. The role of the teacher is to provide the proper amount of assistance, which means providing an 'optimum balance' between the recognised and new activities to enable the learner's progress (Nind, 1999).

The teacher aims to follow the lead of the pupils by using responding techniques to engage them in interactive games and gives pupils the freedom to explore and develop interaction based on their own preference. This promotes the pupil's ability to understand and gain control of their interaction. The teaching process is the development in the pupil's social interaction which often leads to less controlling and more responsive behaviour by teachers (Watson and Fisher, 1997). "The features of repetition, predictability and contingency in the adult responses to pupils are believed to facilitate communication and social awareness as they do in early parent-child interaction" (Watson and Fisher, 1997, p. 80-81). The success of an interaction is the quality of involvement rather than the outcome (Barber, 2008).

The central aspect of Intensive Interaction is process-based learning, which means the pupil will not be approached in small steps of activities and this suggests its activities are not structured in a traditional sense of teaching. The learning process is based on exploring and doing and its discovery is an interpretative teaching style, rather than a directive one. During interactive sequences, the teacher shares the learning power with the pupil and attempts to foster a way of developing self-autonomy and provide control for the pupil (Nind and Hewett, 2005).

Nind (2009), Nind and Hewett, (2005), and Kellett and Nind (2003) provided more details of the key features in Intensive Interaction as follows:

## **1. Mutual Pleasure**

A central part of Intensive Interaction is the creation of mutual pleasure that is playful and enjoyable (Nind and Hewett, 2005). The teacher is responsible for seeking to make these pleasurable interactions happen with the recognition that the learner is an active and dynamic participant (Kellett and Nind, 2003). The aim of mutual pleasure is to be an intrinsic and vital motivator for the teacher and pupils, while they are interested in and enjoy each other and maintain and repeat interactions (Kellett and Nind, 2003). Enjoyable interactions allow teachers and pupils to feel comfortable and safe and then provide an excellent context for pupils to explore and discover the effects of their acts on others (Kellett and Nind, 2003). This also enables the pupil to accomplish 'a state of self-experience' such as delight, anticipation and excitement (Nind, 2009). Mutual pleasure of interactions play a crucial role in which the development of social, language and cognitive abilities are inseparably interconnected (Kellett and Nind, 2003).

## **2. Interpersonal Behaviours**

The interactive style of Intensive Interaction requires the teacher to adjust her/his interpersonal behaviours or behaviours that connect with relationships between teacher and pupils by responding to the pupils' interests and abilities (Kellett and Nind, 2003). Adjustments in interpersonal behaviour are usually dependent on intuitive factors because adults do not use the same pattern of speaking to babies as they do with other adults (Nind, 2009). Adults often adjust their behaviour to babies, such as their voice and language becoming slow, high pitched or melodic in tone with frequent questions (Kellett and Nind, 2003). The character is interestingly playful and the tone is non-directive. This 'talk style' has been described as 'motherese' which significantly supports language development (Weistuch and Byers-Brown, 1987, cited in Kellett and Nind, 2003). Smiles, head-bobbing, and embraces are used and facial expressions are exaggerated to capture and maintain interest (Nind and Hewett, 2005). The mutual

modification of behaviour to respond to the partner's activities allows communication to be achieved (Kellett and Nind, 2003).

### 3. Timing

Timing is crucial for effective interaction (Kellett and Nind, 2003). Teachers seek to be sensitive to a pupil's signals in order to monitor the pupil's ability for attention and to respond to the pupil by joining their pace (Kellett and Nind, 2003). This sense of proper timing that responds to the pupil's pace is described as 'synchronising rhythms' (Schaffer, 1977, cited in Kellett and Nind, 2003). To achieve synchronising rhythms, the teacher is responsible for watching, waiting, pausing, and becoming involved in the pupil's activities at their own speed (Nind, 2009). Careful timing and synchronising rhythms help the teacher respond to the different signals of the pupils (Kellett and Nind, 2003). The signals to start, continue or end an interaction are required to arrive at an optimum level of interaction (Nind and Hewett, 2005). With these skilful interactions, the teacher creates joint attention, turn-taking and the feeling of being a sensitive listener (Nind, 2009).

### 4. Imputing Intentionality

'Imputing intentionality' is a fundamental element in Intensive Interaction to support the transition of pupils who are still at a pre-intentional level<sup>1</sup> of communication development to intentional communication<sup>2</sup> (Newson, 1979; Harding, 1983, cited in Nind, 2009). In this process, the teacher responds to the pupils as if they are behaving intentionally, such as using sounds, facial

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<sup>1</sup> Pre-Intentional level of communication development: behaviour is not under the children's own control, but it reflects their state (such as comfortable, uncomfortable, sucking, grasping). The child does not act intentionally, but adults react as if they do. Source: <http://www.communicationmatrix.org/sevenlevels.aspx>

<sup>2</sup> Intentional level of communication development: behaviour is under the children's control, but it is not yet used to communicate intentionally. Source: <http://www.communicationmatrix.org/sevenlevels.aspx>

expressions or body postures as if they are communicating something that has meaning (Kellett and Nind, 2003). By doing this, the teacher facilitates the creation of a two-way conversation which is an important stage of practising the skills required for real turn-taking and conversation (Nind, 2009). In the beginning, the teacher's interpretations of the pupils' behaviours or sounds may not correspond to the meaning that pupils' intend at all, but over time they will co-construct meanings that are believable (Nind, 2009). Finally, the meanings will be those intended by the pupil (Kellett and Nind, 2003).

## **5. Responding Contingently**

A contingent response is pivotal to the entire teaching style of Intensive Interaction (Kellett and Nind, 2003). It is a swift and appropriate response in time and characteristic to the act of the pupil (Kellett and Nind, 2003). By responding contingently, the teacher facilitates the demonstration of social cause and effect, showing that the pupil can influence and control the activity of others (Nind and Hewett, 2005). This sense of being in control will generate feelings of success, which will encourage further exploration and facilitate the pupil's development (Nind and Hewett, 2005). An intuitive form of responding contingently to the pupil is an imitation, including mirroring the pupil's facial expressions and sounds, laughing or showing amusing surprise at any acts (Nind, 2009). Forms of repeating back a pupil's behaviour is a way of showing that pupils can lead and the teacher will follow (Kellett and Nind, 2003). With the premise that behaviour has origins in meaning and emotion, stereotyped behaviours, such as rocking or hand flapping, are seen as the pupil controlling his/her world (Nind and Hewett, 2005). The teacher, therefore, might respond contingently with some stereotyped behaviours, join in with the pupil's rhythms and movements, and respect what is important to her/him (Nind and Hewett, 2005). Joining in with some stereotyped behaviours is simply used as a starting point of connection and creation of mutual pleasure, yet this does not mean encouraging or discouraging that behaviour (Nind and Hewett, 2005). Being contingent in response in interaction is two-way, which means each person is changed as a result of

the other (Kellett and Nind, 2003). Without contingent responding the teacher would not connect, but instead carry out separate one-way communication (Nind, 2009).

The next section presents the sequences of Intensive Interaction gathered from Nind (1999) and Nind and Hewett (1994, 2001).

## Sequences of Intensive Interaction

- The teacher subjectively observes the pupil by presenting him/herself as closer to the pupil with no threat. This helps the teacher truly to get to know her pupil.
- The teacher begins the Intensive Interaction session where the pupil is most comfortable, and at ease. The session can be in a certain corner of the room while the pupil is sitting, rocking and twiddling.
- The teacher adjusts her interactive behaviour to how the pupil needs her to be. The teacher is trying to get the pupils to enjoy activities with them, according to their preferences and with their agreement. The teacher is trying to help them learn how to enjoy other people, to share personal power in the situation, to participate fully and to enjoy. The teacher adjusts her behaviour cleverly to capture their attention by starting to do something with her face, voice, and body language, which the pupil finds comfortable and acceptable, even interesting. In the session, the pupil feels secure and relaxed with the activities so the teacher shares power with him and makes him powerful.
- The teacher 'tunes in' to the pupil's body language, to his other noises, to his behaviour and lifestyle. This helps the teacher to understand the unique way that s/he behaves and potentially sends signals. The next part is to find ways to respond which are effective for the pupil.
- The teacher finds pupil behaviours to celebrate.
- The teacher stops the interaction when the pupil has had enough.

## Evidence of Effectiveness

After the theory of Intensive Interaction was first evaluated, the evidence of the effectiveness of Intensive Interaction has accumulated in western cultures. Evaluations of Intensive Interaction have been undertaken in different environments and with different age ranges to show its efficacy. Nind's research (1992) was replicated by Mary Kellett (2001) in her doctoral thesis on promoting social and communicative abilities in young children with severe learning difficulties. Six children aged 4-7 years interacted with six novice practitioners. All the children demonstrated the development of their social and communicative abilities. Kellett highlighted some of the important factors affecting the implementation of Intensive Interaction in community schools, including management support, team approaches, coordination, and intervention continuity and fidelity. Thus, the holistic environments inevitably affect one another and cannot be separated from the quality of the interactions. Three cases studies were published (Kellett, 2000, 2003, 2005) and these are detailed below. Judith Samuel (2003) evaluated Intensive Interaction in community living settings for people with profound learning disability (PLD). The findings showed that: 1) home-support staff as novice practitioners can learn to use some of the principles of Intensive Interaction; 2) Intensive Interaction with novice practitioners has a positive impact on the social and communication abilities of people with PLD; and 3) staff perceived a positive impact on the quality of relationship between practitioners and the people with PLD. Many other study results showed that Intensive Interaction has positive outcomes to the development of social and communicative abilities of individuals with SLD and/or autism, which include increased ability to initiate and maintain social engagement and improved pre-verbal communication skills among children and adults. The next section provides examples of the efficacy of Intensive Interaction reported in many other studies.

## Studies with Children and Adults

Watson and Knight (1991) evaluated Intensive Interaction at a school in Edinburgh, Scotland. Intensive Interaction sessions of six teacher-pupil pairs were studied over one school year. The pupils ranged in age from ten years to nineteen years and had profound learning difficulties. Interaction sessions were videotaped and each of the six staff were interviewed about the effects of Intensive Interaction on their pupils and on themselves, related to the new way of working. Results showed the pupils' progress in social engagement and communication abilities.

Watson and Fisher (1997) composed the evaluation of two different teaching methods: Intensive Interaction and teacher-directed group activities. The progress of five pupils with profound learning difficulties and multiple impairments was investigated over a nine-month period in a Scottish school. Data were collected via recording sheets and video recordings. The research analysis showed the development during the two teaching approaches, but during Intensive Interaction sessions all the pupils demonstrated higher levels of active participation, enjoyment and initiated communication compared to the teacher-directed group activities where they tended to be more passive recipients.

Kellett (2000, 2003, and 2005) described case studies of the use of Intensive Interaction with children with severe and complex learning disabilities. Three children with severe and complex learning disabilities were part of six children who participated in a longitudinal research study to evaluate the effect of Intensive Interaction for her doctoral thesis. Intensive Interaction sessions were run over a period of one academic year with Sam (5-year old boy), Jacob (8-year old boy) and Catherine (11-year old girl). The research design used a 'multiple-baseline interrupted time series' and weekly systematic video-recorded observation. The two published assessment measures were also employed for qualitative data generation: Kiernan and Reid's *Pre-Verbal Communication Schedule*, and an adaptation (Nind, 1992)



of Brazelton's (1984) *Cuddliness Scale*. Results showed the progress of levels of social contact and communication abilities made by all of participants. Stereotyped behaviour was also observed to have reduced substantially.

Leaning and Watson (2006) used Intensive Interaction with five non-verbal people, aged between 28 and 38 years, with profound and multiple learning disabilities who attended a day centre over eight weeks in order to build relationships and enhance awareness of emotional skills. The measurement of behaviour change was carried out using both quantitative and qualitative analysis. Before the sessions, the participants were videoed for 50 minutes, which was used as a baseline measure. After the baseline phase, the group of participants was run for eight weekly 50-minute sessions with two facilitators (a Music Therapist and a Clinical Psychologist). The data were collected and analysed by using both qualitative and qualitative methods. The results suggested the participants developed a better interactive ability compared to during the baseline or follow-up phases.

Two decades after the original research of Nind (1992) and Hewett (1995), Intensive Interaction has been embedded in western pedagogy. Now, Intensive Interaction is advocated by government policy in *Valuing People Now* (2009) as an approach for facilitating meaningful two-way communication for people with complex needs (Office for Disability Issues, 2009, p. 38). The current work in Intensive Interaction development seems to be in research for exploring how the practitioners experience using Intensive Interaction and overcome the difficulties they encountered. The sections below discuss practitioners' perspectives on the use of Intensive Interaction.

### **Practitioners' Reflections on the Use of Intensive Interaction**

There are a few studies of practitioners' reflections of the use of Intensive Interaction, mainly conducted in the UK, which provide vividly illuminated

pictures. The following literature is briefly reviewed in this section and revisited in more detail in Chapter 7.

Irvine (1998) provided training Intensive Interaction for four staff –a multi-disciplinary team in a day service who then used it with fourteen adult service users with profound and multiple learning difficulties. Her project presented the positive outcomes of Intensive Interaction on service users and six of the seven users considerably reduced repetitive behaviours. Irvine described the process of working management including supportive teamwork, record keeping, and meeting sessions for video reviewing. The staff viewpoints on Intensive Interaction implementation were provided and discussed.

Samuel and Maggs (1998) provided their account from the perspective of a clinical psychologist and an occupational therapist in introducing Intensive Interaction to people with profound learning disabilities in community houses. They reflected on both the aspects of the success and difficulty on the use of features of Intensive Interaction. The perspectives of two support workers were also presented and discussed.

Smith (1998) described her own experiences and those of colleagues of using Intensive Interaction with Jamie, a 22-year old man, who exhibited autistic behaviour and was described as pre-verbal and being very socially withdrawn. The different styles of staff in doing Intensive Interaction sessions were vividly illustrated.

Stothard (1998) described the rich experience of doing her own Intensive Interaction and of introducing it into the special school in which she worked. She was concerned that offering a curriculum based on teacher-led and skills-based activities taught pupils to listen and understand the teacher, not for the teacher to listen and understand their own communicative methods. By offering words for them to speak or sign at the teacher's pace made the teacher miss many subtle signals that the pupils were trying hard to communicate to the teachers, and so they were unable to teach them to

express their feelings or wishes. Stothard began Intensive Interaction alone and then introduced it to other staff in the school. She described the feelings adopting Intensive Interaction had on staff and some of the challenges that needed to be overcome.

Knott (1998) illustrated a three-year account of her team using Intensive Interaction with Ben, a ten year-old with severe learning difficulties and autism in a residential SLD school. Ben had no language and was described as remote, self-absorbed, and distressed. She described their early attempts to connect to Ben's world. Knott described the feeling of it being difficult, at first, to get rid of the fixed idea of what she wanted to achieve, the feeling of 'getting in' and the feelings of pleasure when she saw Ben being playful and giving her a turn. His self confidence was growing and he showed enjoyment in new experiences. During this time, he initiated communication and could use sound and signing. He was social, not remote, and less self-absorbed.

Nind's (2000) study looked at teachers' understanding of the conceptualization of interactive approaches, using 58 questionnaires and follow up interviews. The teachers' responses were compared with the central elements of interactive approaches identified in the literature. The findings showed that the teachers in this study agreed that the interactive approach supported students to take an active role in their learning, to share some of the responsibility for this and to give and receive feedback. Nind, however, found that teachers at this point were not aware of the importance of the concept of interactive process, which is the key procedure of this approach, rather than being directive and objective.

Nind, Kellett and Hopkins (2001) examined the interactive talk of teachers of learners with severe and complex learning disabilities in the context of Intensive Interaction. Four teachers, who had participated in training on Intensive Interaction, were each invited to submit two video samples using the approach with a communication partner. The eight video clips were systematically analysed for evidence of 'Motherese', which were compared

with the degree of teachers' talk styles and the element of motherese style in the literature, to identify if engagement in the communication process was achieved. The results showed that although motherese was found in all eight of the videos, the degree varied significantly with each teacher. With no particular feature of motherese evident across teachers, this suggested that the use of the motherese style was individual to teachers. Teachers diversely applied a motherese style according to their communication with the learner and the nature of the interaction session. The authors indicated that the teachers who successfully engaged their communication partners were utilising a wide variety of elements of 'motherese' in their interactions.

Cameron and Bell (2001) introduced staff to Intensive Interaction and supported them in using it with their own clients. The results showed that due to the Intensive Interaction intervention, the client made significant communicative changes and the staff member showed an improved ability to match their communication to the client. The staff's improvements included increased responsiveness to non-verbal cues, reduced use of verbal language and an increase in the time given for a response.

A study by Firth, Elford, Leeming, and Crabbe (2007) presented the views of care staff in the north of England using Intensive Interaction with adults with profound and multiple learning disabilities. Twenty-nine staff from four NHS-staffed group homes were introduced to the use of Intensive Interaction and subsequently supported in using the approach with their clients over a 6-month period. Researcher field-notes and semi-structured interviews (before and after the Intensive Interaction intervention) were gathered and afterwards analysed using grounded theory. Seven major themes emerged from the analysis, providing an explanation of the care staff's views on the process of Intensive Interaction implementation: 1) levels of client responses attributed to Intensive Interaction; 2) staff's conceptualisation of Intensive Interaction and its potential outcomes; 3) staff's view of the client's communicative means, personal attributes, and level of understanding; 4) issues related to staff-client relationships; 5) philosophical issues influencing the care environment; 6) practical, personal

and temporal issues affecting the use of Intensive Interaction; and 7) issues related to the momentum of approach adoption.

Samuel, Nind, Volans and Scriven (2008) evaluated the use of Intensive Interaction by novice practitioners with four women with profound intellectual disabilities living in a supported housing service in England. The study involved three practitioners and three observers per participant. Five interaction sessions per week over 20 weeks were examined using a quasi-experimental interrupted time-series multiple-baseline across four participants design. The study tested the hypothesis of whether the novice practitioners could learn to use the principles of Intensive Interaction via multiple measures: video observations, assessment schedules and staff questionnaires. The results showed that these practitioners learned to use mirroring, vocalization and contingent responding. Each participant developed the abilities to become engaged in social interaction and to look at faces, and joint focus was improved. The authors noted that learning through practitioners' reflective practice was a difficult part of the project to implement.

Zeedyk, Davies, Parry, and Caldwell (2009) explored the experience of the newly trained volunteers in Romania with children, aged 4–15 years, with severe communicative impairments who were socially withdrawn and frequently engaging in self-harm. A group of UK volunteers (aged 16-25 years) were briefed on the aims and principles of Intensive Interaction, and then used the approach closely with the children for a two-week period. After two days, the practitioners wrote an account reflecting on their experiences of using this approach which were afterwards qualitatively analysed by the authors. The analysis of reflection written by 12 novice volunteers showed that Intensive Interaction is effective in fostering social engagement in children with severe communicative impairments. The volunteers identified important changes in children's engagement, such as increased social engagement and attention to practitioners, and decreased distress and self-harm. The practitioners' experiences were reported, for instance strengthening their relationship with children and initial doubts.

This section described Intensive Interaction, which is comprised of the definition, features and characteristics, the history of the theoretical development including the critiques of behaviourism approaches to teaching children, and the strengths and concerns of the naturalistic approach underpinning Intensive Interaction. Then, it provided evidence of using this approach from evaluation studies and the reflections of practitioners. The next section discusses the cultural differences to the model of caregiver-infant interaction and attitudes to play.

### **Caregiver-Infant Interaction in Different Cultural Backgrounds**

The theoretical framework of Intensive Interaction has been developed from the model of caregiver-infant interaction found in Euro-American culture (Nind and Hewett, 2005, p. 33-35). The pattern of caregiver-infant interaction is different in other 'non-western' cultures. These cross-cultural differences in child rearing are well documented (Srinivasan and Karlan, 1997; Vincent, Salisbury, Strain, McCormick and Tessa, 1990). This research brings the value of the model of parent-infant interaction from the west to the views' of the eastern community and investigated its application to a different culture. The Intensive Interaction approach has been implemented in Thailand, situated in South-East Asia, where the background of Asian culture differs from the cultural background of Euro-American societies. Whilst the intuition approach of caregiver-infant interaction may be similar as a universal pattern, the cultural framework may influence practitioners of different backgrounds.

In utilizing the Intensive Interaction approach in a country with a different culture, it is necessary to investigate whether there are differences in the way people perceive and interact with children with SLD and/or Autism compared with other cultures. McCollum and Yates (2001, p. 24) suggested that in applying the western philosophies and assumptions of early intervention to cultures in which parent-infant interaction is central, it requires much research or careful examination of all aspects from different cultural perspectives as the model of parent-infant interaction is 'a very private matter,

grounded in each culture's views of the parenting' (McCollum and Yates 2001, p. 28). Parents' perception of their interactions with their infants will also be influenced by their own historical and ecological contexts (Harwood, et al., 1995, cited in McCollum and Yates, 2001, p. 8). Thus, differences in patterns of interaction may stem from several sources: real differences in a child's interactive abilities, the caregiver's perceptions of the child's abilities, the caregiver's emotional response to the child with a disability, or the caregiver's emotional sense of self as a parent. Any one of these may challenge the interactive partnership between infant and parent (McCollum and Yates, 2001). The study of McCollum, Ree, and Chen (2000) revealed that the cultural goals of parent-infant interaction and the placement of value on children's developmental benefits may differ across cultures. Different practices are based on different developmental goals and different priorities for the development of their children (Greenfield and Suzuki, 1998, cited in Greenfield, Keller, Fuligni, and Maynard, 2003).

## **Attitude to Development in Children's Play and Culture**

### **Difference**

The playful pedagogy of Intensive Interaction has been developed from the Euro-American framework, in which the importance of play to children's development gains acceptance among educators and researchers. In the UK, play receives a high value in government consideration and is addressed within policy frameworks at the foundation stage of the curriculum (Wood, 2010). The idea of play is important and formally placed in education as a key characteristic of effective practice and curriculum for early years children (Bennett, Wood, and Rogers, 1997). Likewise in the US, Hyun (1998) stated that many U.S. educators and researchers with Euro-American perspectives strongly believe that child-initiated play and other experiences are related to the child's development of later academic experiences. The value of play of children with special educational needs is highly stressed (Hughes, 1998). Learning through play is extended to enhance the learning of children with all types of SEN (Macintyre, 2010; Sayeed and Guerin, 2000).

## A Play - Work Dichotomy

Research that cultural difference influences beliefs and ideas about children's development and play is evident. Each culture perceives play in a different way and the reactions of adults to play also varies (Hyun, 1998; Roopnarine 2011). Research found that many people from Asia view play as the opposite of child learning in academic orientation, in that they do not support each other. For example, in Hong Kong, Cheng and Stimpson (2004) investigated the relationship between the knowledge of learning through play and the ways in which this knowledge was managed into practice in the classrooms of six kindergarten teachers. They found that teachers in their study faced professional challenges in adopting a child-centred pedagogy in which play-based learning is central. While seeking to include play in the child's learning teachers often think rigidly and mechanically. They had a dichotomised concept of play and learning. Play was employed as a tool to capture the initial interest of children and make them attentive for subsequent direct instruction to achieve pre-determined objectives. It was also used as a reward for the children to relax after their work. They stated that 'participants seemed unaware of opportunities for learning embedded in free play activities, and did not take up opportunities to scaffold learning during play' (Cheng and Stimpson 2004, p. 343). They also noted that teachers tended to express satisfaction with their teaching when planned content was delivered, but they were frustrated when situations did not allow that transmission of knowledge. One barrier of teaching through play is that independent critical thinking and personal inquiry was limited and thus these teachers waited for directions from 'authority figures' (Cheng and Stimpson 2004, p. 344). After one year of reflection and action in research process, nearly all teachers were unable to include play within children's academic activities (Cheng and Stimpson 2004).

Taylor, Samuelsson and Rogers (2010) examine similarities and differences in the perceptions of play among early childhood educators in Japan, the United States, and Sweden. These three countries consider play for early childhood programmes important and the concept of play has been stated in



the National Curriculum Standards for Kindergarten. Their analysis showed that play is considered to be an important process that relates to children's learning and education for Swedish and American teachers. The ideas of play as a child's work were common views in those two countries but not in those of the Japanese teachers. In Japan, some teachers perceived play as a process of learning and developing; however, none of them related play to academic learning and considered play as a child's work. The concepts of play were focused on social and emotional development, and promote a group orientation in classroom.

The Asian teachers' perceptions on play are in the same pattern with those of Asian parents. Parmar, Harkness and Super (2004) investigated cultural beliefs and practices in relation to early childhood education in Euro-American and Asian cultures. They found two contrasting patterns of beliefs and practices. As they anticipated, the Euro-American parents believed that play is an important tool for the early development of preschool children. They considered play helpful in enhancing cognitive development. In contrast, Asian parents did not believe play is important for the cognitive development of preschool children. The Asian parents placed significance on early academic skills from preschool years.

This concurs with the study by Hegde and Cassidy (2009). They explored the significant differences between American and Indian cultures in relation to play-based education. The differences of culture were pinned down as the foundation of classroom practices which centred on academics opposed to play and the obstacles of implementing a play-based curriculum according to western concepts. Most Indian teachers in Hegde and Cassidy's (2009) study indicated that parents were difficult or unwilling to cooperate with the school's play-based philosophy because they lacked knowledge of the importance of play and were more academically oriented.

In India, Roopnarine, Hossain, Gill, and Brophy (1994) implied that most low-income parents were not aware of the value of parent-child play and that play

was not an integral part of most early childhood programmes. Hughes (2004) suggested that early childhood teachers felt obligated to achieve the expectations of parents by producing task evidence of children's learning. Parents did not recognise play as children's natural way of learning and thus children's play opportunities were limited (Hughes, 2004).

In Thailand, there is no a research investigating the attitude of special education teachers to teaching through play. A few studies were found in the area of early childhood education. Dunn and Dasananda (1995) explored Thai parental attitudes about educational practice and found that many parents in Thailand placed a high value on the teaching of academic skills and have resisted the use of a play-based curriculum that was guided by the Thai government. Bloch and Wichaidit (1986) examined parents' and teachers' attitudes about play and work activities in early childhood programmes in Thailand. Their results showed that Thai teachers had a more positive attitude toward play than parents. Attitudes toward play by teachers and parents were positively related to their educational backgrounds. The teachers and parents who were more educated showed a more positive attitude towards play in the curriculum.

The significant aspect of socio-economic culture may be an essential element for parents' and teachers' perspectives on play. In societies with unstable economies, play provision is less formal and it may be assumed that play is considered less valuable. In economically secure societies where early years education can afford to include play, it is assumed that greater value is attached to play (Sayeed and Guerin, 2000, p 19 citing Feitelson, 1977). Thailand is a developing country where the economy is not secure, especially in the rural areas of the north east where the population is poorest in Thailand. An unsecure economy may have an effect on the view of play, where a focus on academic study is dominant and fun-play is much less valued than directed play. Dunn and Dasananda (1995, p. 3) commented that Thai teachers and parents often focus more on 'preparing their children

for the next level of education rather than focusing on meeting their current educational needs', - learning through play.

McLane, Spielberger, and Klugman (1996) examined attitudes toward play and how play is facilitated among early childhood teachers, administrators, and college educators. Classroom observations, interviews, and questionnaires were used to identify attitudes toward the value and relevance of play for early childhood development and education. Initial findings indicated that almost all the respondents valued play for young children but differed in their definitions of play. Teachers' attitudes toward play seemed to stem from their professional training, their work with children, and their own childhood experiences, which reflected their own ethnic and cultural group membership. Overall, the findings suggested that early childhood professionals held a range of perspectives on play reflecting differences in knowledge, values, beliefs, and practices, which were rooted in differences in personal, cultural, and educational experiences.

Klugman (1996) identified shifts of play experiences: students' play histories, and later college and placement site experiences of 169 freshman students at Wheelock College. The survey was comprised of open-ended questions about students' memories of play at home, in school, and about the role of play in learning. The findings indicated that students had vivid memories of home play and school play at break times. Memories of play at school encouraged students to form ideas about what constitutes play in a school setting. Many students perceived a strong connection between play and social development, and the general relationship between play and learning.

The cultural differences in educational goals and practices were also evident in the study of Rosenthal (2003), who found that in high individualistic cultures, such as the United States, play was adopted in early childhood education and knowledge is co-constructed. In contrast, in collectivist communities such as Japan and China adults teach directly to pass on knowledge. Thailand was categorised within collectivism, which is discussed in chapter 3. Rosenthal suggested that educational goals and practice were

valued differently in cultural contexts. The differences of valued educational goals were identified in terms of self identity and motivation, socio-emotional behaviour, and the cognitive process. The differences of valued educational practice were provided in three topics: children's learning environment, learning activities and teacher-child interaction. The goal in table 2.1 could refer to the educational goals and practices in Thailand.

**Table 2.1: Valued educational goals and practices in cultural context: Summarised and adapted from Rosenthal (2003, p.107, 110)**

<b>Valued Educational Practice</b>	<b>Individualism</b>	<b>Collectivism</b>
Self-Identity and Motivation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Able to make autonomous choice among activity options</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Able to accept adults' decision</li> </ul>
Social and Emotional Behaviour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Self-expression and assertiveness should be showed to achieve personal goals</li> <li>• Maintains some autonomy in accepting or rejecting teacher's demands</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Self-expression and assertiveness are controlled to avoid offending</li> <li>• Obedient to teacher's authority</li> </ul>
Cognitive Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Curiosity and exploration are ways of acquiring knowledge</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Uses respected authority and tradition as sources of knowledge</li> </ul>
Children's Learning Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Play is organised to encourage exploration and children's autonomy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Play is organised to facilitate the structured learning planned by the teacher for role learning and imitation of teacher</li> </ul>

<b>Valued Educational Practice</b>	<b>Individualism</b>	<b>Collectivism</b>
Learning Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learning occurs through activities planned for instruction and flexible</li> <li>• Free play provides opportunity for learning through exploration</li> <li>• Encourage children to draw on knowledge from a variety of sources</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learning occurs through training and imitation and is not flexible</li> <li>• Free play is 'fun', not learning</li> <li>• Encourage children to draw on knowledge from oral tradition</li> </ul>
Teacher-Child Interaction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teachers frequently adapt their instruction to children's ability</li> <li>• Teachers encourage children to express their independent thoughts and feelings</li> <li>• Teachers motivate children's curiosity and willingness to explore their environment</li> <li>• Teachers' relationship with children is based on mutual respect and equality</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children frequently adapt themselves to teacher ability</li> <li>• Children are not encouraged to express their thoughts and feelings</li> <li>• Teachers motivate children to be attentive to her teaching</li> <li>• Teachers' relationship with children is hierarchical and is based on children's respect for the teacher</li> </ul>

## Conclusion

This chapter provided the story of Intensive Interaction. It describes what Intensive Interaction is, how to do it and who benefits from this pedagogy. The theoretical framework originated in the UK and was influenced by the caregiver-infant interaction model, which is greatly different from the tradition teaching model of the behaviourist approach. Whilst the behavioural teaching method uses a teacher-controlled instruction, highly structured pre-planned programmes, which emphasise objective-based or task-centred teaching and passing knowledge from teacher to pupils, Intensive Interaction, in contrast, adopts a child-led approach without task-focus, highlighting the quality of interaction with mutual pleasure and shared control. Caregiver-infant

interaction models underpinning the Intensive interaction framework have been supported as being an effective early intervention to facilitate social and communicative competence. This approach has been well-researched for its effectiveness in fostering emotional development and social-communication abilities with people with SLD and autism. As Nind and Hewett (2005) articulated, however, they developed this approach from the literature in the Euro-American model, whose characteristics may differ from other models that hold different ways of life. From the literature review, there is evidence to show that interaction between adults and children is influenced by their historical context, beliefs and values, which embed differently in each culture. Furthermore, the use of mutual pleasure to develop children's education is culturally believed and valued differently based on the educational goal and practice within their own culture. It seems that Thais value the dichotomy between play and children's learning. The next chapter discusses the cultural differences between the countries in which the Intensive Interaction framework was developed and Thailand, the country in which this approach is researched.

# **Chapter Three: Theoretical Framework for Understanding the Possibilities of Thai Culture Influencing Intensive Interaction Implementation**

## **Introduction**

Chapter two described Intensive Interaction and discussed the theoretical framework underpinning the approach. It appears that the interactive characteristics of Intensive Interaction pedagogy, when conveyed to other countries, need to recognise cultural differences, and this process requires further analysis (Nind and Hewett 2005). Cross-cultural literature has shown similarities and differences in culture among countries. Understanding cultural difference is crucial in applying innovation from one country to another and when exploring the influence of culture on an innovative implementation success. Firstly, this chapter explores and discusses definitions of culture. Secondly, a review of the deep meaning of culture is investigated by examining characteristics and dimensions of the national culture in Thailand. The chapter addresses how cultural understandings hold the possibility to affect individual behaviours. It considers how the cultural framework in a country where the beliefs, attitudes, behaviour and desired characteristic of children in society differ from the origins of Intensive Interaction may have an impact on its implementation.

## **The Impact of Culture in Innovative Implementation**

Intensive Interaction was developed in the Euro-American culture. Numerous studies of Intensive Interaction, reviewed in the previous chapter, have been widely implemented in western countries, such as the UK and Australia. The

five cultural dimensions<sup>3</sup> used by Hofstede (2010), when applied to the Euro-American cultures and Thailand, identify differences between these countries. This reflects Thailand holding a different culture from western countries. Transferring the western style of pedagogy to other countries is challenged by culture differences which may lead to the restriction of innovative implementation. Culture is a powerful force in how people see the world and interact in that world. It shapes the way countries work and affects the way in which people respond to change (Rondinelli, Middleton and Verspoor 1990). Since my research aims to understand the influence of culture on Intensive Interaction implementation, the definition of culture first needs to be considered.

## The Concept of Culture

The concept of culture is highly complex and broadly used by several different disciplines. Many scholars have attempted to provide comprehensive definitions of culture but the consensus is inconclusive (i.e. Tylor, (1871)<sup>4</sup>; Kluckhohn (1951); Triandis (1972)<sup>5</sup>; Geertz (1973)<sup>6</sup> Schein (2004). The differences in defining culture are based on the diversity of views of culture and the different words within, rather than a complete difference in the entire content. The different emphases, however, have led to a better understanding of culture itself. A well-known and accepted definition of culture was offered by an anthropologist, Kluckhohn (1951):

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<sup>3</sup> Hofstede's five cultural dimensions are discussed in p. 62-79.

<sup>4</sup> Culture is "that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, customs, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society" (quoted in Kroeber and Kluckhohn, 1952 p. 43).

<sup>5</sup> [Culture is] a subjective perception of the human-made part of the environment. The subjective aspects of culture include the categories of social stimuli, associations, beliefs, attitudes, norms and values, and roles that individuals share (quoted in Miriam and Christopher, 1993, p. 41).

<sup>6</sup> A culture is viewed as a pattern of symbolic discourse and shared meaning that needs interpreting and deciphering in order to be fully understood (quoted in Miriam and Christopher, 1993, p. 41).

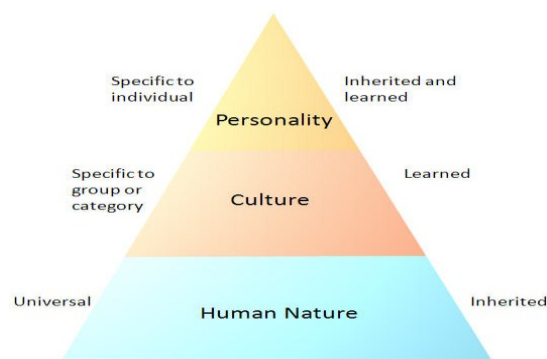


Culture consists in patterns of ways of thinking, feeling and reacting, acquired and transmitted mainly by symbols, constituting the distinctive achievements of human groups, including their embodiments in artefacts; the essential core of culture consists of traditional (i.e. historically derived and selected) ideas and their attached values (Kluckhohn, 1951, p.86).

Kluckhohn's definition provided the basic elements of culture as a useful starting point for discussing the meaning of culture adopted for this thesis. Since there is no ultimate universal definition of culture, Kluckhohn's definition is discussed alongside other scholars' definitions: such as Triandis (1972), Schein (2004) and Hofstede (2001, 2010). These definitions focus on the patterns of thinking based on values and can be seen to complement each other as discussed below.

First, culture consists of patterns of "thinking, feeling and reacting" which means the way of thinking, feeling and reacting are consistent. These consistent patterns of thinking are derived from "ideas and their attached values" of people in a group. Kluckhohn's definition of culture placed emphasis on patterns of thinking based on ideas and values. He provided a basic evaluation of the comparative importance of value as a concept, and the visible, or artefact, aspects of culture. He forefronts ideas and values as the 'essential core of culture' over and above artefacts, where artefacts are defined as visible products such as architecture, clothing and language. Ideas and values are considered to be mental aspects that are in the human mind. They are influential variables for products of action and for formulating further action (Kroeber and Kluckhohn, 1952, p.181). This type of definition of culture is adopted for this thesis because it is relevant to the purpose of the study where practitioners act, feel, think and evaluate when implementing Intensive Interaction. The central role of values in culture indicates that Intensive Interaction implementation could draw positive or negative response according to practitioners' cultural values and hence affect their attitudes towards Intensive Interaction.

Second, the term “acquire and transmit” means culture is socially learned, not innate. It is perceived as resulting from learning from success within a social group and passes those experiences from one generation to another. This definition includes the ideas of Triandis (1972), who defined culture as a *subjective perception* of the *human-made* part of the environment such as attitudes, norms, values and roles. This suggested that culture does not involve genetic parts of body, such as skin colour, hair texture and nose shape. This also allows for explanations of inborn behaviour that do not have to be learned. This inborn behaviour seems to link to culture at the universal level, explained by Hofstede (2001, 2010). He maintained that cultures are found in three levels, as demonstrated in **figure 3.1**: individual (personality), collective (culture) and universal (human nature), where each level has a different degree of uniqueness. The individual level is the uniqueness of an individual’s personality that need not be shared with any others. The individual’s personality derives from partly inherited (nature) and partly learned (culture) aspects, the latter deriving from collective and childhood. This view relates to Triandis and Suh’s (2002) suggestion that culture influences the shaping of personality. At the universal level, it presents what human nature has inherited in common and what is modified by culture. By inherited, Hofstede (2010, p.6) means the ‘operating system’ or the biological system of the human body that determines universal human basic ability and need. This includes the ability to display emotionally, the need to connect with others and the need to play. Although play has a universal dimension, it also has ‘culture-specific aspects’, as discussed in chapter two.



**Figure 3.1** Three levels of uniqueness in human mental programming  
(Hofstede, 2010, p. 6)

We need to be aware that people belong to multiple culture levels at the same time and that culture at each level may influence differently the degree of Intensive Interaction implementation attempted by Thai educators. It may be possible that human nature (see figure 3.1), although modified by culture, still remains, to some extent, in human knowledge. This can be a strength for Intensive Interaction because a key element of Intensive Interaction is using interactive play, which has been characterised as an instinct (or human nature). This means it may simply be implemented by many educators as a natural form of ability, but it can be affected by culture overlay. For example, when interactive play involves being on the floor with children, the notion of body hierarchy<sup>7</sup> (always being above the child) predominates to prevent the type of interaction. This key aspect of the study, the impact of the interaction between instinct and culture, is presented in detail in chapter six. The model in figure 3.1 helps visualise the importance of individual differences and personal experiences on behaviours. Cognitions, attitudes, perceptions, and behaviour at an individual level should be discussed when implementing new ways of working.

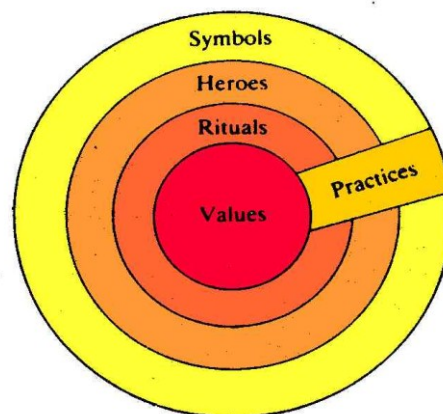
After classifying 164 different definitions of culture across various disciplines, Kroeber and Kluckhohn (1952) proposed a more comprehensive definition of culture expanded from the one discussed above. They said: “*culture consists of patterns, explicit and implicit, of and for behaviour acquired and transmitted by symbols, constituting the distinctive achievements of human groups, including their embodiments in artefacts; the essential core of culture consists of traditional (i.e. historically derived and selected) ideas and especially their attached values; cultural systems may on the one hand be considered as products of action, on the other hand as conditioning elements of further action*” (p. 181). In this definition, the words “explicit and implicit” are added to describe culture features. Explicit culture is the artefacts level, presenting a set of observable behaviours regularly found in a group, which is overt and readily visible by insider and outsider, for example clothing, greetings, and art. In contrast, implicit culture refers to underlying ideas and

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<sup>7</sup> Hierarchy is discussed later in p. 64-66.

values, which drive the consistent patterns of explicit behaviour, such as beliefs, perceptions and feelings.

Hofstede (2001, p.10; 2010, p. 7-10) extended the feature of explicit and implicit culture, classifying expressions of culture into four layers: symbols, heroes, rituals and values. These four core elements are presented in an onion diagram model, as shown in **figure 3.2**. *Symbols* are the outermost layer of culture. They present language, gestures, objects, dress, or an act that is known and has meaning for groups who share the same culture. This layer is easily developed, copied and changed. *Heroes* represent the next layer. Those are persons, real or imaginary, who serve as the role models for behaviour. *Rituals* are collective activities which are considered socially essential, including the ways of paying respect to others, daily conversation and religious ceremonies. *Symbols, heroes and rituals* are visible and, essentially, are the culture practices. *Values* are the deepest level, which form the essence of culture. Unlike the first three layers, values are invisible and largely hidden by the other layers. They determine the meaning of practices and are the inclinations of people in a group to prefer and choose one over others. Values are obtained very early in life and tend to develop beyond the conscious awareness of a person as an adult.



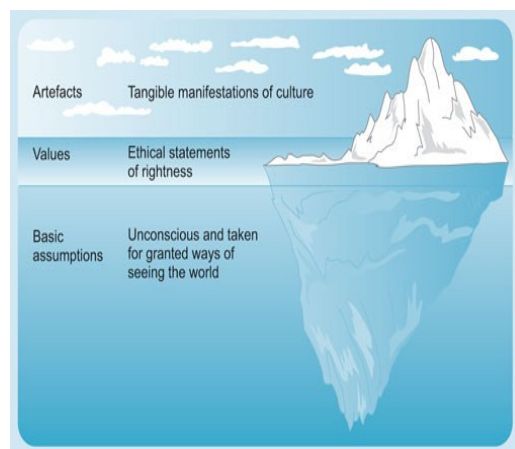
**Figure 3.2:** The “onion”: Manifestations of culture at different levels of depth  
(Hofstede 2010, p.8)

In this thesis, working to observe and understand the symbols, heroes, and rituals of a Thai teacher's culture, as a researcher, I gained insights into underlying core cultural values. The research led to a heightened awareness of how the symbols, heroes, rituals and values of Intensive Interaction may be incongruent with the culture of a group of teachers. For example, Thai heroes are parents, teachers, monks and Buddha. These heroes should be highly respected and not questioned. The ritual conversation pattern with children is one-way, from adult to child, and not two-way communication which is the purpose of Intensive Interaction. By understanding the teacher's reactions to the symbols, heroes, rituals, and values of Intensive Interaction, I gained insights into how the teacher may experience a new intervention and could use this frame to ask teachers their perceptions of Intensive Interaction's cultural differences from the ones they are more familiar with. By understanding the practice and value conflict, I could better understand teachers' perceptions and work together with them to develop a cultural response to the new intervention.

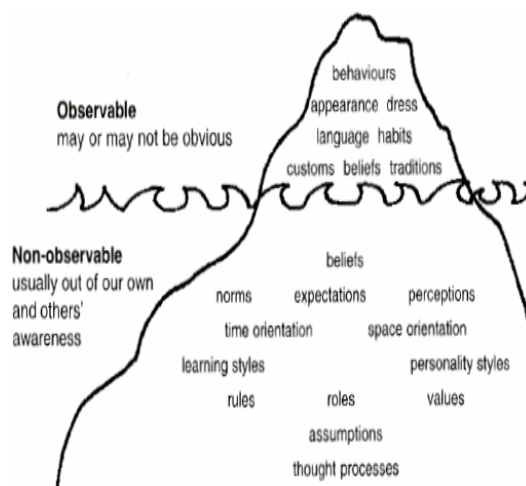
While Hofstede's culture, discussed above, illustrated the explicit aspect or practice, Schein's (2004) model emphasised implicit features of culture. He proposed three levels of culture ranging from the very visible to the very invisible. At the first level, culture is visible through artefacts, which is probably the easiest level to observe as it consists of the visible behaviour of people. It includes the visible products of the group such as architecture, language, clothing, manners of address, organization process and practice, rituals and ceremonies. At the middle level, culture involves supported beliefs and values which reflect an indication of what the group members consider to be acceptable and important which may influence the decisions and actions that they take. At the deepest level, culture is unconscious or taken for granted, through beliefs, perceptions and thoughts that shape the member's interpretations. These *taken for granted beliefs* are judged as basic assumptions within a social group. Whereas values in the middle level are subject to discussion, basic assumptions generally "*tend to be non-confrontable and non-debatable*" (Schein, 2004, p. 31). Schein's model has been described as the iceberg metaphor (see figure 3.3) as it illustrates the

difference between surface and deep culture. Only the small top part of the iceberg is visible, consisting of practices (artefacts and behaviour), while the rest is underneath the water line, and is comprised of two deeper levels: norms and shared basic assumptions. The top of the iceberg is supported by the much larger part underwater, which is therefore invisible but a powerful foundation. What influences how we perceive things and how we behave is hidden below the surface.

**Figure 3.3: The iceberg model of culture**



Source<sup>8</sup>



Source<sup>9</sup>

<sup>8</sup> OpenLearning (28 September 2012) Organisation culture - Management: Perspective and practice. From <http://openlearn.open.ac.uk/mod/oucontent/view.php?id=403948&section=3>.



Source<sup>10</sup>

Schein's three levels of culture help this thesis distinguish different levels of culture. It helped me to recognise the importance of the core of the iceberg (values and basic assumption) under the water. The implication is that the introduction of a new ideology to people in different cultures should pay attention not only to the visible practice of the top iceberg, but also the more important part of their values, norms and shared basic assumptions that is invisible under the waterline but an unconscious awareness which is a powerful force to change. Hofstede and Schein help illustrate that some perceptions of the implementation of Intensive Interaction evaluated by the teachers' values and basic assumptions may be at deeper levels beyond the teachers' consciousness where they may feel, think and evaluate but could not explain the origins of their feelings. They are also not a static model - icebergs change shape, ebb and flow. These leave the possibility to affect change, to alter ways of thinking whilst maintaining the fundamental basis within which those actions take place.

<sup>9</sup> Brisbane catholic education (1998 cited in Piepenburg, K., 2011, p. 9), *Critical analysis of Hofstede's model of cultural dimensions: To what extent are his findings reliable, valid and applicable to organisations in the 21st century?* (GRIN Verlag).

<sup>10</sup> The image by James Penstone: From <http://opengecko.com/interculturalism/visualising-the-iceberg-model-of-culture/>

Kroeber and Kluckhohn suggest that culture makes up ‘the distinctive achievements of human groups’ and is ‘historically derived and selected’. Culture, in this sense, suggests that values and shared basic assumptions are the result of a successful learning process in the past by a group. This also includes Schein’s framework that focuses on culture as a problem-solving process that a group learns over a long period of time from their environment. If the problem-solving process succeeds, it will be regarded as ‘truth’ and, therefore, “*to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think, and feel in relation to those problems*” (Schein, 2004, p. 17). This provides the link between culture, ecology and the historical process of a group, thus highlighting the origin of cultural values in that group. It connects to Nieto’s (1999) definition of culture:

The ever-changing values, traditions, social and political relationships, and worldview created, shared and transformed by a group of people bound together by a combination of factors that can include a common history, geographic location, language, social class, and religion (p.48).

Nieto acknowledged that differences in economic, political and socialisation levels influence the culture of a society. They all affect the elements of culture as norms, values, and the basic assumption of behaviour. Similarly, Triandis (1994a, p. 22-24) explained that culture is dependent on particular geographical, ecological, and historical contexts, which shape the way people in that community raise their children. Hofstede (2001) articulated that the origins of value systems shared by a social group are developed within a variety of ecological environments. Hofstede et al (2010) further provided explanations of the origin of their cultural dimension as being based on ecological environments. In this study, while exploring practices and values that influence Intensive Interaction implementation, the historical, economical, political, religious and educational factors are investigated in order to explain its application. Culture is inseparable from its ecological system background and, therefore, the application of Intensive Interaction in different cultures



cannot be understood without the study of historical factors within that country.

## **A Study of Cultural Differences**

The research reflects my adoption of the definition of culture as patterns of ways of thinking based on values which guide people's action. A value is defined by Kluckhohn (1962, p.395) as "a conception, explicit or implicit, distinctive of an individual or characteristic of a group, of the desirable which influences the selection from available modes, means and ends of action". This definition is congruent with that of Hofstede (2001, p.5) who has proposed that value is "a broad tendency to prefer certain states of affair over others" and perceived it to be the main element of culture. Values are feelings toward positive and negative sides, for example, decent versus indecent, or moral versus immoral. From the definition of culture, it follows that different cultures can be differentiated based on people's various values. Conceptualising a system of value is an important way to understand the cultural differences among nations. Learning national culture differences among nations allows me to understand people implementing an innovation devised from nations of a different value background.

This research has applied Geert Hofstede's (2010) "cultural dimensions model of differences in nation cultures". The reasons for this, first of all, are: his notion of the definition of culture is congruent with Kluckhohn. Hofstede (1991, p.4) calls the patterns of thinking, feeling, and acting 'mental programmes' that function like 'software of the mind'. Many mental programmes are usually learnt and well established within a person's mind from early life. To access the differences of national culture, Hofstede (2010) categorized cultural values into five dimensions and made it possible to compare different cultural groups.

Hofstede defined national culture as "the collective programming of the mind which distinguishes the members of one human group from another" (1984,

p. 21). This is distinguished from the universal and individual level of mental programming. The collective level, however, is shared with some but not all people in that nation. A person's mental programme comes from the social environments in which that person grows up – family, school, work place and community.

Second, Hofstede's work has been widely accepted and has been used extensively by Thai educational researchers to explain characteristics and behaviours of teachers and students in Thai settings, and to study the impact of culture on educational change in Thailand, for example, Burn and Thongprasert (2005), and Hallinger and Kantamara (2000, 2002).

Hofstede (1984) conducted a six-year study to investigate culture differences among people from 66 countries, including Thailand. He used a large sample of the employees of International Business Machines (IBM) Corporation, who worked in similar positions in different countries, to investigate and demonstrate cultural difference. A survey was conducted between 1967 and 1973, and 1,170,000 cultural difference questionnaires were returned from employees in 66 countries and 20 languages. The analysis focused on country differences in answers on questions about employee values. His work demonstrates significant cultural differences between Euro-American countries and many developing countries, like Thailand.

## **Hofstede's Framework and its Relevance to Thai National Cultural Values**

The following section discusses the cultural dimension of Hofstede's work (2010). The application of this theory provides an opportunity to understand the essential patterns of thinking, feeling, and acting in the Thai nation. This helps to understand the differences of cultural values where Intensive Interaction is already in practice, and of Thailand, where the concept of Intensive Interaction does not yet exist. Hofstede's five dimensions of cultural variation in values referred to the basic elements of common structure in the

cultural value of the countries. They provide an important framework not only for analysing national culture but also for considering the effects of cultural differences on implementation of an innovation. However, he clearly stated that characterising a national culture refers to the common element within each nation which does not mean that every person in the nation has all the characteristics acquired in that culture. Hofstede (2010) defines the five cultural dimensions as follows:

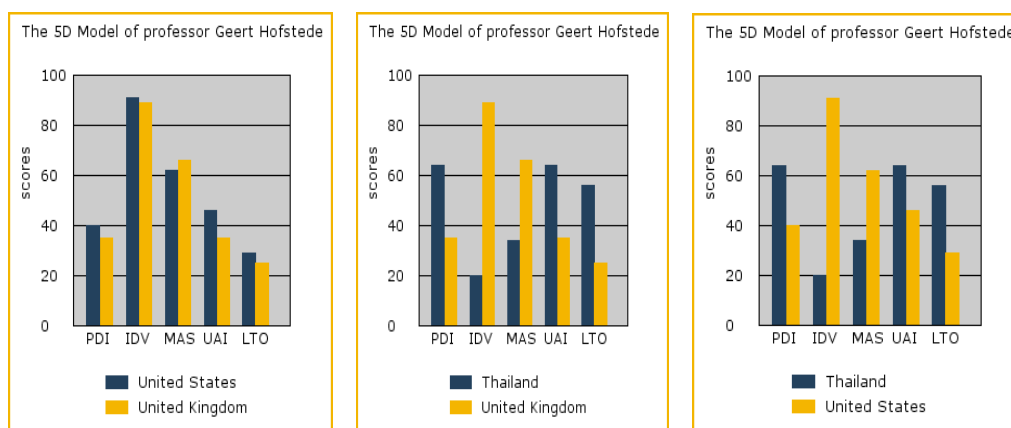
1. *Power distance*: “the extent to which the less powerful members of institutions and organizations within a country expect and accept that power is distributed unequally” (p. 61).
2. *Individualism/Collectivism*: “individualism pertains to societies in which the ties between individuals are loose: everyone is expected to look after him or herself and his or her immediate family. Collectivism as its opposite pertains to societies in which people from birth onwards are integrated into strong, cohesive in-groups, which throughout people’s lifetime continue to protect them in exchange for unquestioning loyalty” (p.92 ).
3. *Masculinity/Femininity*: “A society is called masculine when emotional gender roles are clearly distinct: men are supposed to be assertive, tough, and focused on material success, whereas women are supposed to be more modest, tender, and concerned with the quality of life. A society is called feminine when emotional gender roles overlap: both men and women are supposed to be modest, tender, and concerned with the quality of life” (p.140).
4. *Uncertainty avoidance*: “the extent to which the members of a culture feel threatened by ambiguous or unknown situations” (p.191)
5. *Long-term Orientation/ Short-term orientation*: long-term orientation stands for the fostering of virtues oriented toward future rewards—in particular, perseverance and thrift. Its opposite pole, short-term

orientation, stands for the fostering of virtues related to the past and present—in particular, respect for tradition, preservation of ‘face’, and fulfilling social obligations (p.239).

Table 3.1 and figure 3.4 show Hofstede's findings comparing scores and rankings for Thailand, the United Kingdom and the United States.

Dimensions of National Culture	Power Distance (PDI)	Individualism (IDV)	Masculinity (MAS)	Uncertainty Avoidance (UAI)	Long term Orientation (LTO)
Thailand score	64 (high)	20 (low)	34 (weak)	64 (moderately high)	56 moderate)
United Kingdom (UK) score	35 (low)	89 (high)	66 (strong)	35 (low)	25 (weak)
United States (US) score	40 (low)	91 (high)	62 (strong)	46 (low)	29 (weak)

**Table 3.1: The five dimensions of national cultural framework of Thailand, the United Kingdom and the United States (Adapted from Hofstede, 2010)**



**Figure 3.4: The five dimensions of national cultural framework of Thailand, the United Kingdom and the United States (source)<sup>11</sup>**

<sup>11</sup> From [http://www.geerthofstede.com/hofstede\\_dimensions.php?culture](http://www.geerthofstede.com/hofstede_dimensions.php?culture)

The table and figure above showing Hofstede's findings suggests that Thailand and the two developed countries are different in all cultural dimensions. The UK and US are classified as having a small power distance, weak uncertainty avoidance, individualism, masculinity and short-term orientation, whilst Thailand is classified as having high power distance, strong uncertainty avoidance, collectivism, femininity and long-term orientation. The important differences between the UK and US and Thailand appear to lie in the individualism versus collectivism dimension and low versus high power distance.

This figure clearly demonstrates the differences between the cultural values of the UK and US, where Intensive Interaction has been successfully implemented, and Thailand, where this is a new venture. The different degrees of Hofstede's dimensions affect organisation structure and cooperative behaviour, which may influence the degree of success of Intensive Interaction implementation.

In the following section, each dimension and its implications are discussed. Additionally, the literature on Thai cultural values is discussed along with Hofstede's cultural dimensions in order to provide a holistic view of Thai society.

### **Thai High Power Distance**

Table 3.2 below presents the lists of cultural differences in teacher-student interaction related to the low power distance dimension versus high power distance adapted from Hofstede (1986).

Low power distance	High power distance
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• stress on impersonal “truth” which can be in principle obtained from any competent person</li> <li>• a teacher should respect the independence of his/her students</li> <li>• student-centred education (premium on initiative)</li> <li>• teacher expects students to initiate communication</li> <li>• teacher expects students to find their own paths</li> <li>• students may speak up spontaneously in class</li> <li>• students allowed to contradict or criticize teacher</li> <li>• effectiveness of learning related to amount of two-way communication in class</li> <li>• outside class, teachers are treated as equals</li> <li>• younger teachers are more liked than older teachers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• stress on personal “wisdom” which is transferred in the relationship with a particular teacher (guru)</li> <li>• a teacher merits the respect of his/her students’</li> <li>• teacher-centred education (premium on order)</li> <li>• students expect teacher to initiate communication</li> <li>• students expect teacher to outline paths to follow</li> <li>• students speak up in class only when invited by the teacher</li> <li>• teacher is never contradicted nor publicly criticized</li> <li>• effectiveness of learning related to the excellence of the teacher</li> <li>• respect for teachers is also shown outside class</li> <li>• older teachers are more respected than younger teachers</li> </ul>

**Table 3.2: Cultural differences in teacher/student interaction: Low power distance versus high power distance (Source<sup>12</sup>)**

The first dimension, *Power Distance*, is a term used as a measure of the degree to which persons accept and expect an unequal distribution of power in societies (family, school, institution and organization). Hofstede et al (2005; 2010) suggest that in countries with a high score in power distance, people accept wider differences in power and inequality in their societies than those with low scores. The Power Distance Index (PDI) values for Thailand are 64, ranking between 34-36th out of 76 countries and regions (Hofstede et al., 2010, p.58). They indicated that Thailand obtains a high power distance, which suggests Thai people generally have a high tolerance of unequal

<sup>12</sup> Adapted from Hofstede (1986) Cultural differences in teaching and learning. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 10, pp. 301-320.

power distribution in the society. This refers to the acceptance of a hierarchical authority system and the expectation of status differentiation. High power distance in Thailand differs markedly to the UK and the US, where a much lower, flatter hierarchal structure is found.

Supporting Hofstede's analysis of high power distance, many scholars have clearly stated that the whole picture of Thai society is characterised as a hierarchical structured social system (Holmes and Tangtongtavy 1997; Komin 1991; Mulder, 1979; Podhisita 1998). The Thai social system is '*first and foremost a hierarchically structured society*' (Komin, 1991, p.132), where the interactions of Thais are manipulated within this context of a strong hierarchical system (Holmes and Tangtongtavy, 1997). In Thai society, ranks and positions are the norm. Each Thai person can be classified as '*higher or lower, younger or older, weaker or stronger, subordinate or superior, senior or junior, richer or poorer, and rarely equal, in relation to one another*' (Podhisita 1998, p. 39).

Early in life, each Thai is trained to be a functioning member of society within the hierarchical system. They learn to understand and accept their position in society, such as what rank they hold and how they are supposed to treat others according to that position. The others in their life are measured as their juniors, their seniors or their peers. Thai people need to be able to identify their own status in relation to others (Holmes and Tangtongtavy, 1997). Direct personal questions are common, and asked when Thais meet a new person. These questions are about age, education background, home town, marital status, and help them understand that person's place within the social hierarchy and to know how he or she should be treated. Without this knowledge of the place of their own position, they cannot really function in social interaction with confidence.

In interaction with others, language is used according to the level of hierarchy in the vertical position. Thais address themselves as *Phi* a word meaning 'elder brother or sister', and the opposite of *Phi* is *Nong* 'younger brother or sister' (Holmes and Tangtongtavy 1997; Segaller, 2005). For much

older persons, Thais use relative status to address themselves, such as Mair (mother), Paw (father), Pa (aunt), and Lung (uncle). In conversation, Thais mostly avoid the use of the second-person pronoun 'you' and instead use the name of the person they are addressing (Holmes and Tangtongtavy, 1997). The words *Khrap*, spoken only by a male, and *Kha*, only by a female, are added at the end of a sentence in order to give politeness when talking to a superior or teacher. Furthermore, **body hierarchy** is another important factor attached to hierarchy of seniority. Thais consider the height of the head to be important. The head is the locus of the soul, which is treated by the others with the greatest respect. Touching the heads of adults is generally avoided. The head of a junior person should never be higher than that of a senior in age or rank (Holmes and Tangtongtavy 1997; Segaller, 2005). The first hierarchical system takes root in families and permeates to school, the workplace and the whole interaction context in Thai society. High power distance or hierarchical systems shape the behaviour of directors, teachers, pupils, and parents in important ways.

The hierarchical form of Thai society has a great influence on Thai organisational structures. Thai structures often differ significantly from the structures evident in foreign organisations (Holmes and Tangtongtavy, 1997). The relationships between Thai superiors and subordinates are unequal. The hierarchical relationships are clearly defined by age, birth, title, rank, status, position or achievement. In Thai seniority culture the Thai younger people are culturally expected to give respect to the older ones, including through language and body hierarchy as previously discussed. There are generally recognized duties for older and younger people. Older people should provide supervision and assistance to younger people. In exchange, the young one should loyally respect and obey the elder. In Thai culture, power is often centralised and subordinates expect to be told what to do. In the small power distance countries, such as the UK and the US, the belief is that inequalities amongst people should be minimized. The relationships between superiors and subordinates are more equal. Subordinates are supposed to be consulted before superiors make a final decision that affects their work.



In modern Thai society, however, the degree of inequality has moved towards reducing hierarchy. Thai society is now characterised by more equality (Klausner 1997; Webster 2004). For example, Hofstede and Hofstede (2005) argue that, for high power distance, power is based on tradition or family and the ability to use force. For a small power distance society, such as the UK and the US, power is based on formal position, expertise, and ability to give rewards. Thailand, particularly in university settings, is beginning to move more to this position.

### **Implications of High Power Distance to Intensive Interaction Implementation**

In the Thai classroom, the acceptance of inequality between teachers and pupils is considered as a virtue and an appropriate way for the development of the child's characteristics. *The teacher is treated with respect or even fear* (Hofstede, 2010, p.69). A teacher teaches and reminds pupils about appropriate behaviour concerning hierarchy. The pupils are taught to recognize the difference between "high place" and "low place", as in the roles of teachers and pupils. A teacher places herself in a higher status, keeps her distance and treats a pupil as lower in rank. A teacher generally does not approach the pupils' place, instead she demands the pupils move to her place.

All pupils are supposed to be quiet in the presence of the teacher and they seldom initiate communication. Inequality in Thai society is connected to the Thai values of '*Bunkhun*' relationship<sup>13</sup>. Teacher-centredness is the focus of the Thai educational process, where the teachers plan the academic routes and direct the pupils' learning. Thai teachers initiate all communication and pupils only speak when requested to. The Thai high power distance tends to be more authoritarian and supports a one-way communication from the teacher to pupils, which limits pupil-teacher equal interaction and

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<sup>13</sup> Bunkhun' relationship is discussed in p. 82-84.

relationships, and reinforces the different hierarchical positions or vertical relationships between teacher and pupils.

The characteristics of Thai high power distance as discussed above greatly differ from those of small power distance countries. Intensive Interaction is a child-centred educational process which seeks to develop and make the best of pupils' initiated communication with their own preference and pace. Pupils are encouraged to discover intellectual direction from their own initiation and they are actively engaging in their own learning. Successful learning of Intensive Interaction is derived from the establishment of two-way communication between pupils and the teacher. The teacher approaches a pupil in the pupil's place and interaction starts from the child. Therefore, this dimensional value may make Thai teachers less comfortable in adopting child self-learning approaches, the self-paced approach of Intensive Interaction, because they are familiar to teacher-structured and controlled teaching methods.

Traditionally, physical contact is not often encouraged in the Thai classroom and pupils should not touch their teacher's hair, head, or shoulder, or sit on the teacher's lap. Keeping a distance to gain respect and obedience is considered appropriate. Conversely, Intensive Interaction encourages the use of physical contact between the teacher and pupils as a way of communication. The teacher-pupil relationship is equal and pupils are encouraged to share power with the teacher, and to lead their own way of learning and communicating. The teacher is encouraged to meet at the pupil's level, which may include getting down on the floor with them.

There are ways, however, in which the dimension of high power distance can support the education of teachers in relation to implementing Intensive Interaction. For instance, when running the Intensive Interaction programme for teachers and educators, I was older and in a higher position within the university than the prospective teacher participants in the teaching programme. When asking the Thai teachers to volunteer for the Intensive Interaction teaching project, the teachers were of lower status (in terms of

age, position and seniority) and naturally were more likely to give a positive response as they commonly show consideration or *kwarm greng jai*<sup>14</sup> towards the older person. Moreover, saying ‘no’ is culturally difficult for Thais. However, it is important to note that I was aware that polite acceptance could be the normal response of teachers to *greng jai* me rather than as a demonstration of their support for change. In modern Thai society, there may be more of a challenge when the teaching project is delivered by a practitioner who is not in a formal position to give them a reward. This aspect is discussed in more detail in the sections on Thai collectivism and ‘*Bunkhun*’<sup>15</sup> relationships. Further, this current study recognised that a less experienced or younger teacher on a team may refrain from contributing new ideas at a meeting because she or he feels *greng jai* towards senior colleagues.

## Thai Collectivism

The table 3.3 provides the lists of cultural differences in teacher-student interaction related to individualism versus collectivism.

Individualism	Collectivism
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• positive association in society with whatever is “new”</li> <li>• one is never too old to learn; “permanent education”</li> <li>• students expect to learn how to learn</li> <li>• individual students will speak up in class in response to a general invitation by the teacher</li> <li>• individuals will speak up in large groups</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• positive association in society with whatever is rooted in tradition’</li> <li>• the young should learn; adults cannot accept a student role</li> <li>• students expect to learn how to do</li> <li>• individual students will only speak up in class when called upon personally by the teacher</li> <li>• individuals will only speak up in small groups</li> </ul>

<sup>14</sup> Kreng Jai value is discussed on p. 86-87.

<sup>15</sup> Bunkhun’ relationship is discussed on p. 82-84

Individualism	Collectivism
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• confrontation In learning situations can be salutary: conflicts can be brought into the open</li> <li>• face-consciousness is weak</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• formal harmony in learning situations should be maintained at all times (T-groups are taboo)</li> <li>• neither the teacher nor any student should ever be made to lose face</li> </ul>

**Table 3.3: Cultural differences in teacher/student interaction: Individualism versus collectivism (Source<sup>16</sup>)**

The second dimension, *Individualism and collectivism*, describes how people connect with their society through individualism or group activity. The ways of connecting have a direct influence on behaviour of people in communities. The Individualism Index (IDV) value for Thailand is 20 and the rank is 58 - 63rd out of 76 countries and regions (Hofstede et al, 2010, p.97). From this, Hofstede described Thailand as strongly collectivist, rather than individualist, while the UK and US are strongly individualist societies. This reflects that Thai society considers the importance of the in-group more than the individual. Thai culture encourages interdependence instead of independence and supports thinking naturally in terms of 'We' rather than 'I'. The good relationship of living and working is valued, rather than work-achievement (Hofstede et al, 2010).

This dimension is consistent with Komin's analysis (1991) that Thai people rank hardworking achievement much lower than social relationships. It means they value the importance of maintaining good relationships over serious devotion to work. Komin explains this result should not be interpreted as Thai people dislike working hard, but it means that hard work alone is not effective enough to be recognized as successful in Thai culture. Sorod (1991), however, notes that for Thais the relationship-orientation is more

<sup>16</sup> Adapted from Hofstede (1986) Cultural differences in teaching and learning. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 10, pp. 301-320.

crucial than the work-orientation. Consequently, Thais work hard to build and maintain relationships among a wide and complex network of people (Holmes and Tangtongtavy, 1995). In Thai society, the relationship in all social levels resembles family. They tend to spend their time engaging in activities that build trust and relationships between them and discussing broad topics. In individualist societies, task issues are considered to be more important and, as a result, they spend most of their time in discussion about specific functioning details of the project as opposed to broad topics (Hofstede et al, 2010).

Thais value obedience more than personal choice and harmony more than exploration. Consequently, opinion is decided by the group. Personal opinions differing from the group belief is deemed as an inappropriate characteristic. Direct confrontation with others is considered undesirable and bad-mannered. Thai people try hard to avoid conflict that might create uncomfortable and unpleasant feelings. Saying no is a kind of a confrontation which should not be used. It is important to avoid losing face and to maintain harmony.

There have been some observable changes in Thai society after Hofstede's work was first reported in the 1980s. He mentioned that Thailand had become a more individualist country, although Thais' individualism deviated from that of western countries (Hofstede, 1999). Some scholars have discussed Thai culture as demonstrating individualism. For example, Klausner (2005) argues that Thai society is in a *transitional cultural stage* where its traditional core values rooted in hierarchy are disrupted by the emerging forces of individualism, egalitarianism and good governance. Podhisita (1998) argues that individualism and autonomy are usual in Thai culture. The individualistic nature of Thai characteristics refers to "self-centredness", in which 'to do as one wishes is to be a genuine Thai' (Podhisita 1998, p. 51). On the other hand, Komin (1991) maintains Thai interaction is interdependent-oriented<sup>17</sup>, which is consistent with collectivist

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<sup>17</sup> Interdependence is discussed in p. 88-89.

culture. She also explains the greater difference of Thai individualism is in the social-relationship pattern in terms of the 'ego' self.<sup>18</sup>

### **Implications of Collectivism for Intensive Interaction Implementation**

According to Hofstede's work, in the Thai collectivist classroom, the pupils are not expected to speak up unless they are personally invited. They are expected to be passive and obedient to their teacher and they are not expected to have independent behaviours. In the Thai classroom, the teachers always deal with the pupils as part of an in-group, rarely as an isolated individual. Saving the teacher's 'face' is the most important of the Thai interactions. The purpose of learning is to know *how to do*, rather than *how to learn*. The pupil should learn; the teacher cannot accept that the pupil can have agency in their learning. In the individualist classroom, pupils expect to be treated as individuals. Confrontations and disagreements are considered beneficial and face-consciousness is not strong. The purpose of learning is to know how to learn, rather than how to do.

The desirable characteristic for Thai pupils seems to be inconsistent with that of those of Intensive Interaction. While Thai teachers expect pupil characteristics of being passive, obedient, and dependent, Intensive Interaction fosters active, initiation, autonomous and individual aspects. Intensive Interaction as a non-direct teaching method helps pupils to initiate and construct their own learning. In contrast, Thai educational objectives are to transmit explicitly knowledge from the teacher to the pupils, focusing heavily on memorising, not constructing. Allowing the pupils' room for constructing their own learning is not familiar to Thai special education teachers, who see the key knowledge source residing in the teacher. The knowledge source constructed by the child (lower in age and position) is not often considered to be important or appropriate.

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<sup>18</sup> Ego is discussed later in p. 86-87

The collectivist work place has an impact on the uptake of teachers in the Intensive Interaction programme. This dimension proposes that a personal relationship is a prerequisite to getting the job done. The goal of successful work is building the relationship. It is more likely that Thai teachers may not continually implement Intensive Interaction if a good personal researcher-teacher relationship is not reinforced consistently. The communication exchange is to maintain harmony in a group and save face. In working with Thai teachers, I needed to consider discussing 'broad topics', such as the personal matters and the well-being of the Thai teacher, as well as pedagogical issues. Generally, discussing personal matters shows 'working as a family'. It is assumed that in order to work successfully with Thais there is a need to focus on the sense of the personal relationship amongst a group of teachers as a priority because there is high possibility that as the personal relationship develops, work issues will be blended in and finally achieved.

With respect to both high power distance and collectivism, Thai people attempt to avoid standing out. Therefore, promoting diversity of practice or ideas tends to be an unfamiliar notion within Thai culture. This may influence knowledge sharing in Intensive Interaction workshops. For instance, if a younger teacher has an idea different from a senior teacher, she possibly will not insist on her own ideas and not argue for her own understanding. A younger teacher is likely to choose to remain silent and do what she wants to in secret or follow the need of a senior teacher, rather than insist on her own desire. This avoids a conflict which may affect their important relationship. If a younger teacher shows a serious dispute against a senior teacher, this will be interpreted as disrespect towards the senior staff members. The clash of ideas is not only the disagreement of that idea, but it also expresses a conflict to a person who owns that idea. This can be explained by Komin (1991), in that "Thai people have a very big ego and thus it is very hard for them to separate one's idea and opinion from the "ego" self. To argue with expressed opinions is often automatically taken as an insult to the person holding those opinions. This hierarchical social structure and lower individualism in Thai society may have an influence on group sharing

practices that expect each teacher to exchange knowledge and share ideas freely about their experiences of the use of Intensive Interaction.

Hampden-Turner and Trompenaars (1997) stated that due to the community-based culture of Thai society, change is essentially a group, not an individual, process. This suggests Thai teachers, in the direction of change, are more likely to move as a group than as individuals. While group work is an important consideration in fostering change in western cultures, in Thailand this may be more necessarily in order to create opportunities for change. According to Hofstede (2010), people in a high power distance and low individualism society are willing to follow those in charge with little desire to direct change. It is crucial to be aware that Thais tend to wait to adopt a new innovation when a large group of other institutions have already adopted it. This may affect the adoption of Intensive Interaction for Thai teachers.

## Thai Femininity

The table 3.4 shows the lists of cultural differences in teacher-student interaction related to the masculinity dimension versus femininity.

Masculinity	Femininity
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• teachers openly praise good students</li> <li>• teachers use best students as the norm</li> <li>• system rewards students' academic performance</li> <li>• students admire brilliance in teachers</li> <li>• students compete with each other in class</li> <li>• students try to make themselves visible</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• teachers avoid openly praising students</li> <li>• teachers use average student as the norm</li> <li>• system rewards students' social conscious</li> <li>• students admire friendliness in teachers</li> <li>• students practice mutual solidarity</li> <li>• students try to behave modestly</li> </ul>

**Table 3.4: Cultural differences in teacher/student interaction: Masculinity versus femininity (Source<sup>19</sup>)**

<sup>19</sup> Adapted from Hofstede (1986) Cultural differences in teaching and learning. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 10, pp. 301-320.



This third cultural dimension describes the differences of societies according to the extent to which societies impose rigid differentiation of gender roles. Hofstede (1991, p. 83) defines masculinity as 'toughness' and femininity as 'tenderness.' The Masculine Index (MAS) Values for 76 countries and regions indicated that Thailand was indexed 34 and ranked 64th (Hofstede et al., 2010, p.143). Thailand's ranking of Masculinity is the lowest among the Asian countries and thus Thai culture is indicated to be the most feminine amongst countries in Asia, while the UK and the US tend toward masculinity. In the feminine countries, humbleness, modesty, caring for others and quality of life have earned high value in society whilst ambition, achievement and success are the dominant values in masculine cultures. In a culture with a low degree of masculinity, students behave humbly and avoid standing out from the crowd. In a high degree of masculinity society, students try to make themselves visible in class and compete openly with each other (Hofstede et al., 2005, 2010).

As discussed in the previous dimension, Thai collectivism places a high value on social relationships over achievement and performance. Thai people thus display feminine characteristics in order to seek and maintain harmony of social relations (Komin, 1991). Thais exhibit politeness, quietness, modesty and a low level of expressing themselves in an assertive way. Thais tend not to speak up as that kind of assertiveness can be interpreted as lacking respect and *kwarm greng jai*. In Thai classrooms, the above characteristics are imbued in pupil education.

However, the expected degree of feminine characteristics between man and woman in Thai society seems to be unequal. According to Bandhumedha (1998), for Thais, the activities, and mental and moral characteristics of male or female are sharply differentiated. The Thai man is supposed to be physically strong, aggressive, and dominant, whereas the Thai woman is considered weak, passive and gentle. With this belief, the Thai man perceives himself to be a dominant leader, not a follower.

The feminine dimension leads Thai people to avoid conflict. Thais place great importance on living and working in a pleasurable atmosphere and on encouraging a strong spirit of community (Komin, 1991). Anything that harms the harmony of the social group should be avoided, for example, in a classroom, a teacher avoids openly praising a pupil or having fun with a particular pupil so as to avoid individualising. In practice, maintaining harmonious relationships are valued highly, even in a workplace that requires work-achievement and productivity. In contrast, a masculine culture such as the UK and US emphasises results, performance, and productivity. Here the harmonious process may be sacrificed for achievement.

In feminine countries such as Thailand, people prefer to be unabrasive, kind, pleasant and non-assertive in behaviour (Rohitratana, 1998) and prefer to resolve conflict by compromise and negotiation, rather than assertive behaviour. Meanwhile, people in high masculine cultures desire clear task goals of performance and conflict is resolved at an individual level. Thai people avoid heavy emphasis on results, if they harm the goals of spirit and community.

### **Implications of Femininity for Intensive Interaction Implementation**

This dimension suggests that the *desirable characteristics* that the Thai nation requires pupils to develop are different from those that Intensive Interaction expects of pupils. Thai teachers prefer the pupil's characteristic to express a high level of being obedient, humble and non-assertive in behaviour. This preference tends not to foster a child's lead and initiation, confidence and independence and is inconsistent with Intensive Interaction. Further, Intensive Interaction may build the pupils' characteristics of assertiveness and independence, characteristics the Thai teachers are not familiar with and do not value. Thai teachers will interpret the pupil's expression of need in an assertive way as personal disloyalty. In addition, due to the role of leaders and assertive nature of many men in Thai society,

it is important to consider whether a male teacher may have a greater challenge in the adoption of a child-led activity than a female teacher.

## Thai High Uncertainty Avoidance

Table 3.5 presents the lists of cultural differences in teacher-student interaction related to the low uncertainty avoidance versus high uncertainty avoidance.

Low uncertainty avoidance	High uncertainty avoidance
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• students feel comfortable in unstructured learning situations: vague objectives, broad assignments, no timetables</li> <li>• teachers are allowed to say “I don’t know”</li> <li>• students are rewarded for innovative approaches to problem solving</li> <li>• teachers are expected to suppress emotions (and so are students)</li> <li>• teachers interpret intellectual disagreement as a stimulating exercise</li> <li>• teachers seek parents’ ideas</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• students feel comfortable in structured learning situations: precise objectives, detailed assignments, strict timetables</li> <li>• teachers are expected to have all the answers</li> <li>• students are rewarded for accuracy in problem solving</li> <li>• teachers are allowed to behave emotionally (and so are students)</li> <li>• teachers interpret intellectual disagreement as personal disloyalty</li> <li>• teachers consider themselves experts who cannot learn anything from lay parents, and parents agree</li> </ul>

**Table 3.5: Cultural differences in teacher/student interaction: Low uncertainty avoidance versus high uncertainty avoidance (Source<sup>20</sup>)**

The fourth cultural dimension of ‘*Uncertainly Avoidance*’ refers to the extent to which people in a society feel threatened by uncertain and ambiguous situations and try to step away from them. The Uncertainty Avoidance Index

<sup>20</sup> Adapted from Hofstede (1986) Cultural differences in teaching and learning. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 10, pp. 301-320.

(UAI) value for Thailand is 64 and ranks 45<sup>th</sup> out of 76 countries and regions (Hofstede et al, 2010, p.193). Compared to the UK and the US, Thailand is more uncomfortable with uncertainty. The Thai country is indicated as having a high tendency to avoid unexpected and ambiguous circumstances, refusing atypical ideas and does not readily accept change. Thai people tend to avoid situations where there is uncertainty by establishing formal rules and procedures to eliminate the unpredictability of the future. Life in Thai society is inherently more stressful than where uncertainty-avoidance is low. Thai society is characterized by a high level of anxiety, nervousness, stress, and aggressiveness. In weak uncertain-avoidance countries, anxiety levels are relatively low, aggression and emotion are not supposed to be shown (Hofstede et al, 2010).

### **Implications of High Uncertainty Avoidance for Intensive Interaction Implementation**

According to Hofstede et al (2010), the education process in Thailand tends to suggest to pupils that the world is a 'hostile' place and they need to be protected from experiencing unknown situations. In societies that are more comfortable with uncertainty, the world is basically 'benevolent', and experiencing new situations is encouraged. In Intensive Interaction an exploration of pupils' own learning is emphasised but many Thai teachers may be afraid to allow pupils to construct their own learning due to the fear of pupils' different ideas. Thai teachers tend to be anxious if there is an unexpected teaching situation. In order to avoid these situations, they tend to prefer a teaching method where they can have a high level of control over the teaching-learning environment rather than the pedagogy constructed and led by the pupils.

Given that the Thai culture shows a higher tendency to seek stability, change is considered to be disturbing. Innovation may be neither highly valued nor highly supported by Thai practitioners. It is possible that although a new teaching method holds merit for the school, and for individual teachers, they

might feel uncomfortable adopting and changing to a new practice. The interconnection of characteristics of Thai high power distance and uncertainty avoidance may further reinforce a tendency for Thai teachers to wait for orders and direction from the top rather than starting or trying a new approach on their own.

### **Thai Long-Term Orientation**

The fifth cultural dimension, Long-Term Orientation, attempted to differentiate in thinking between the East and West by designing a Chinese value survey based on Chinese ancient teachings or Confucian teachings. Long-term orientation was previously named as a Confucian work dynamism. Confucianism is 'a set of rules for daily life derived from Chinese history'. For Long-Term Orientation Values, the index for Thailand is 32, and the rank 62nd out of 93 countries and regions (Hofstede et al, 2010, p.257). The index indicated Thailand has a culture with a high-middle degree of long-term orientation while the UK and the US are classified as short-term oriented societies which value a focus on quick results. The Thai country prefers a long-term orientation toward life which means, rather than truth, Thais tend to search for the virtue of being patient and considering future rewards.

### **Implications of Long-Term Orientation for Intensive Interaction Implementation**

With regard to the education of pupils with SEN, Thai special education teachers and parents of pupils with SEN normally focus on the long-term results of the next stage of education, for example long-term planning for teaching objectives in order to move pupils to a general school. As a result of long-term future planning, there is a tendency towards a focus on the skills that the next educational stage requires instead of fostering the ability pupils

with SEN need for their current real life. The ideas of a long-term orientation dimension in Hofstede's research relates to the law of karma<sup>21</sup>. Many Thais believe the results of activities are influenced by long-term desire (Knutson, 2004).

## **Critique of Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions**

Although widely accepted and used, Hofstede's framework to characterise national culture has also invited many criticisms and questions. The first criticism concerns the methodology Hofstede used. Triandis (1982) and McSweeney (2002) argued that Hofstede's research is based on a survey questionnaire, which is not adequate for the purpose of identifying national cultures. However, Chapman (1996, p. 18-19) stated that Hofstede has a richness of expertise from outside the questionnaire that can defend his position for the analysis of the database. A second criticism is generalization. McSweeney (2002) and Triandis (1982) contended that although Hofstede used a large number of survey questionnaires, the average number per country was small and thus it does not secure representativeness. A database drawn from one company is not a 'national sample' and cannot provide information about whole national cultures. Hofstede said he measured differences among cultures and this set of samples can provide information about those differences (Hofstede, 1998, 2002). A third criticism is that cultures cannot equate with nations, because any one nation often includes multiple cultures (Baskerville, 2003). Hofstede admitted this is true, but they are the only sources available for comparison and thus 'better than nothing' (Hofstede, 1998, 2002, p.1356). Fourth, critics contended that the IBM database might be too obsolete (the data were collected from 1967-1973) to depict any national character of a modern nation. Hofstede (2001, p. 73) argued that the cultural dimensions found derive from 'centuries-old roots' that cannot easily be changed. Recent replications have supported that validity was not lost (Hofstede 1998, 2002). The fifth criticism is that four or

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<sup>21</sup> Karma is discussed later in p. 85-86

five dimensions are inadequate to explain cultural differences (Triandis, 1982). Hofstede agrees and welcomes additional dimensions to be added to his original work. Cultural differences are also criticized for 'stereotyping' people and reducing everything about a person to those 'differences' (Hall, 1997, p. 258). 'Large culture differences' are considered in that they may result in the 'otherisation of foreign educators, educations, students and societies' and ignoring the complexity of individual differences (Holliday, 1999, p. 238). The studies of cultural difference, however, have been replicated by many researchers, and the consequences of cultural differences have been repeatedly reported. Sondergaard (1994, p. 251) discussed 61 works replicating Hofstede's model and found that **the four base dimensions: power distance, individualism, uncertainty avoidance and masculinity**, were 'largely confirmed'. Hofstede (2001, appendix 6, p. 503-520) noted 140 sources of a database external to IBM had validated his cultural indexes.

Although his dimensions have limitations which attract some criticisms, they are informative and thus serve as a useful starting point to build cultural understanding of the core values and beliefs that influence the complexity of individual behaviour and perception. Triandis (1982, 1994b) suggests that in spite of limitations, Hofstede's framework can serve as a theoretical foundation for explaining cultural differences amongst countries and for predictions of organisational behaviours. Williamson (2002) suggests that disregarding Hofstede's approach would be a mistake since it provides a valuable framework for working in social science. My position is that we should first learn about cultural differences in general and then try to learn as much as possible about the specific culture of the individual we are dealing with. This cultural dimension, therefore, provides a useful framework for beginning to comprehend the role of culture in innovative implementation in my country.

## Thai National Culture and Implications for Using an Intensive Interaction Approach

There is an attempt within Thai research to reduce the European-bias perspective by developing the Thai national character from its own cultural interpretation. Research by Suntaree Komin (1991) is the only study by a Thai researcher on national culture. This section discusses fundamental Thai values drawn mainly from Thai perspectives. Some are not Thai but have lived in Thailand sufficiently long to be embedded in Thai culture. In 1978 and again in 1981, Komin conducted an extensive study regarding Thai culture, based on large samples among Thai people from different geographical and occupational backgrounds. From the perspective of cross-cultural psychology, she published her analysis of the values and behavioural patterns of Thai people in 1991. Komin's study analysed nine value clusters used for explaining the Thai national character. These consisted of 1) Ego Orientation; 2) Grateful Relationship Orientation; 3) Smooth Interpersonal Relationship Orientation; 4) Flexibility and Adjustment Orientation; 5) Religion-Psychical Orientation; 6) Education and Competence Orientation; 7) Interdependence Orientation; 8) Fun-Pleasure Orientation; 9) Achievement-Task Orientation. Her study reflected Thai values and basic assumptions in the deeper level which could explain the origin of the national dimension related to Thai people proposed by Hofstede. The work of other scholars is discussed alongside this when appropriate. The following discussion, however, focuses on important Thai values that may influence Intensive Interaction implementation: Gratitude: '*Bunkhun*' Relationship; Religion- Psychical Orientation: '*Karma*'; Face Saving, Criticism Avoidance and *Kreng Jai* Values; Interdependence: '*Paeng-pa Ah-sai*'; Fun Pleasure: '*Sanuk*'.



## Gratitude: 'Bunkhun' Relationship

The grateful or *Bunkhun* relationship is the most fundamental value of Thai society (Holmes<sup>22</sup> and Tangtongtavy, 1997; Komin, 1991; Podhistia, 1998). This perception belongs to national Thai culture and is legitimate for almost all Thai people, regardless of their class position (Mulder, 1979)<sup>23</sup>. According to Komin, Thai people are raised in a manner that puts a high value on the process of gratefulness and reciprocity of goodness. This means a person should acknowledge the kindness or *Bunkhun* provided to him/her by persons who give favour or help. For example, a person should feel *Bunkhun* and indebtedness to his or her parents, teachers who give his or her knowledge, and superiors who help him or her to overcome a difficulty (Holmes and Tangtongtavy, 1997). These perspectives of Thai national relationships are deeply rooted in all persons and are particularly powerful among rural people such as the Isan villagers where this research was carried out. One who receives *bunkhun* normally feels dependent towards and obliged to persons who give *bunkhun*. This is an important part of the foundation of the Thai hierarchical social structure (Komin, 1991; Mulder, 1979). This Thai value is helpful for Thai society in many ways. For example, they have close relationships with each other and it helps the hierarchical interaction run smoothly and avoid conflict. On the other hand, this value can strengthen inequality in society, such as those who feel indebted will be obedient and not express disagreement to those who give *Bunkhun*.

In Thai culture, the teacher's role is not only to teach, provide knowledge, and give help, guidance, and advice. They also have a responsibility to instruct students how to behave according to Thai tradition and culture as the nation desires. This is known as '*bunkhun*' (Podhisita 1998). This is strongly supported by the parents of the students. Significantly, most of the teaching

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<sup>22</sup> Dr Henry Holmes is a long-time resident in Thailand and is chairman of Cross-Cultural Management, a 40-year old Bangkok-based company.

<sup>23</sup> Dr. Niels Mulder is an independent anthropologist who has been actively engaged with Thai ways of life for more than 30 years.

of basic values of Thai society is done in schools across the country. Because of this, teachers are highly respected and are considered to be authoritative and knowledgeable. Thai students are taught to feel respectful and grateful because of the teachers' *Bunkhun*. In this situation the teacher is creating a moral debt. The debt is supposed to be returned by students being respectful and behaving appropriately (Mulder, 2000), which may suppress initiative (Mulder, 1997). Students are supposed to preserve 'face' to the teacher by giving their obedience. Teachers are considered as foster or second mothers and many of them are called *Mair* (mother) for female teacher and *Pow* (father) for male teacher from kindergarten to university.

A part of reciprocity of *Bunkhun* to teachers is shown in *Wai Khru* day. As in Asian societies, *Wai Khru*, or national teacher's day, in Thailand is a ceremony to pay respect to the teachers. In *Wai Khru* Ceremony, all of the students come to school with flowers to lay at the teacher's lap or feet. This is to show that all students, including students with autism and SLD, give respect, obedience and gratefulness towards their teachers. This ceremony is illustrated on the web by some foreign teachers in Thailand such as Barrow (2009) and James (2009). *Wai Khru* is held each year in every school, university, and other educational establishment throughout the Thai kingdom.

In order to accomplish work with the Thai people, creating gratitude is necessary in order to establish *Bunkhun* and a basic power connection (Komin, 1991). Holmes and Tangtongtavy (1997, p.27) proposed three key Thai concepts of management in the Thai workplace. I have to, first, earn their friendship and trust and, second, I have to be in a position of seniority with some authority to command and, third, I have to be sincere and give something to make them feel indebted.

The first and third concepts are establishing the obligation of loyalty '*Bunkhun* or *Phrakhun*', and the second is the development of unequal power '*Phradet*', in order to make the work succeed (Holmes and Tangtongtavy, 1997). These three concepts are the combination of the elements of both morality (*Bunkhun* or *Phrakhun*) and power (*Phradet*) of Thai behaviour as

described by Hanks (1962 cited in Mulder, 1979). *Bunkhun*, however, may not be enough to achieve the work if *Phradet* is not achieved in order to give rewards to the subordinate. The combination of morality (*Phrakhun*) and power (*Phradet*) known as '*Baramee*' is a crucial concept that enables work to be done amongst Thais.

### Implications of '*Bunkhun*' Relationship for Intensive Interaction Implementation

*Bunkhun* value creates a part of social harmony order for the Thai country. On the other hand, it can increase the inequality of teacher-pupil relationships as the teacher's high authority over pupils strongly links to the teacher-centred education model which has been inherent in Thai schools for a long time. It tends to create the 'rightness' for Thai teachers and suppresses pupils' initiation and exploration because the teacher is always 'right'. This Thai situation is in the opposite direction to Intensive Interaction that promotes a student-centred education model and stresses education based on the student's exploration, with teachers and pupils engaging more evenly.

*Bunkhun* relationships can be a challenge when working with Thais when I, myself, have neither historical *bunkhun* to the participant teachers nor *phradet*, authority power for giving them rewards. Nevertheless, Thais generally respond positively or accept the asking of others due to hierarchy and '*Kreng jai*' value, especially a person in a higher position. This may be a good starting point for running the project in Thai society, although the express intention is to enable teachers to recognize the work of Intensive Interaction for themselves.

According to Burn and Thongprasert (2005), the *Bunkhun* relationship is one of the Thai values which is viewed as a barrier to knowledge sharing. Other Thai values, such as high power distance, high uncertainty avoidance, collectivism, and *Kreng jai* value, emphasise unequal power, where the

voices of the most senior are practised and respected above the less senior. Where *Bunkhun* is well established, possibly through long-term relationships, this can lead to difficulty in putting forward a dissenting voice. The sharing of different ideas is not encouraged and situations of conflict, rather than being revealed and sorted, tend to be hidden. Such cultural issues may be impediments to knowledge and idea sharing in Intensive Interaction workshops amongst Thai participant teachers.

### Religion- Psychical Orientation: 'Karma'

Theravada Buddhism is the religion that is adopted by most Thai people and has a significant role in the everyday life of Thais. Within the element of this religion, the law of *Karma* is a significant concept and used the most in everyday life interaction. In general, Thais assume that differences of one's social status, rank or position are determined by different karma: good karma and bad karma (Holmes and Tangtongtavy, 1997). 'Good karma' is used to relate to one's success and 'bad karma' to one's failure (Komin, 1991). The karma works over the ages explaining time perspectives: past, present, and future. It is used in order to explain the present status of the poor or the rich, the lucky or unlucky. What one did in the past life would have an effect on the present life, whereas what one does at present would affect the future life (Mulder, 1979). Moreover, some Buddhists believe in rebirth (Barr 2004) and that karma will determine the status of people when they are reborn. The values of karma form a hierarchical system strongly rooted in Thai society (Chareonwongsak, 2011<sup>24</sup>; Mulder, 1979), which is linked to Hofstede's power distance in the cultural dimension. Many Thais view karma as an unchangeable destiny (Chareonwongsak, 2001). Others believe that whilst the law of karma can shape their lives, if they desire to improve their lives, they need to dedicate themselves to *tham bun* (merit-making), and this can accumulate good karma for a better future.

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Most Thais tend to do good things to others in order to collect good karma. Komin (1991) stated that karma is used as a caution not to do bad thing to others because bad karma will be the result. It is also used as a 'defence mechanism' after undesirable experiences. For example, when one experiences misfortune, the cause of that misfortune is attributed to one's bad karma. On the other hand, Komin observed that this belief may affect the determination to improve or change individual life and responsibility for his or her own doing. It may often lead to attitudes of acceptance in the present state while hoping for a better situation in the future (Mulder, 1979) and will not struggle to improve their own life (Chareonwongsak, 2001).

### **Implications of 'Karma' for Intensive Interaction Implementation**

In Thai schools, the karmatic perspective can support helping pupils with SEN as teachers believe what they do with pupils is *tham bun* (merit-making) in order to increase the good karma for their future. Karma may, however, be a disincentive for teachers when working with children as they may believe that a child's potential is already pre-ordained by their previous life experiences. The majority of Thai people believe that if one is born with a disability, this is a reflection of their bad karma in a previous life, and they may also believe that pupils with SEN are paying for their faults in the previous life. This perspective may lead to less responsibility for providing good education for pupils with SEN. Also, if the teaching situation is not successful the teachers may attribute this to pupils' bad luck related to their former life.

### **Face Saving, Criticism Avoidance and Kreng Jai Values**

Thai people have a very big ego, a deep sense of independence and a very high value of self-esteem (Komin, 1991). For Thais, saving one's ego is the key rule for all social interactions. This value is observed by all levels of Thai

social interaction - superiors, equals, and inferiors with difference only in terms of degree. Thais can easily provoke an emotional reaction if the “ego” self is violated. This “ego” orientation takes root in three key values: Face Saving, Criticism Avoidance and *Kreng jai*.

The ‘face’ is identical with ‘ego’, and Thais put tremendous emphasis on both. Saving one another’s ‘face’ is of great importance for all Thai interactions. In dealing with a person, the most important interpersonal social rule is to avoid public confrontation. For a Thai, making a person lose ‘face’, regardless of rank, is to be avoided.

As Thais are very “ego”-oriented, it is thus very difficult for the Thai to dissociate one’s idea and opinion from the “ego” self. A strong criticism to an expressed idea is often automatically taken as criticism to the person holding those ideas. Thais do not want to make people lose face and try to avoid criticising not just superiors, but their equals, and to some extent, their inferiors as well.

The concept of *Kreng jai* underlies everyday interpersonal behavioural patterns of Thais. It refers to “an attitude whereby an individual tries to restrain his own interest or desire, in situations where there is the potential for discomfort or conflict, and where there is a need to maintain a pleasant relationship” (Holmes and Tangtongtavy 1995). It also means displaying respect (Klausner, 1993), as well as the wish to avoid embarrassing other people, intruding, or imposing upon them (Servatamorn, 1977, cited in Hallinger and Kantamara, 2003, p.117).

### **Implications of Face Saving, Criticism Avoidance and Kreng Jai Values for Intensive Interaction Implementation**

By tradition, the Thai teacher expects pupils to exhibit behaviours such as *kreng jai* and giving teacher’s face. As Intensive Interaction encourages

autonomy it is possible that the characteristics of the approach will be viewed as working against some teachers' ego, particularly face-saving and *kreng jai*. These values support a hierarchical system, and high power distance, as well as collectivism dimensions, in which obedience or even fear and respect are key elements of traditional teacher-pupil relationships. As discussed above, Intensive Interaction may have an adverse impact on a child's desirable characteristics including less assertiveness, obedience and fear. Consequently, an uncomfortable feeling may happen to a teacher who prefers the solidly traditional role of Thai teacher and child's obedient characteristics.

Although these values are the appropriate way to handle interactions for Thai people, there are some disadvantages. For example, a younger teacher may not feel able to express their true attitude and ideas when experiencing Intensive Interaction in group discussion when she senses that it may be against her senior colleagues, because she prefers not to participate in any conflict and wants to save face of other teachers. These values, therefore, can be an important barrier for discussing different knowledge and ideas amongst Thai teachers as discussed previously in the section of '*Bunkhun*' relationship.

### **Interdependence: 'Paeng-pa Ah-sai'**

This value reflects the community collaboration attitude through the value of co-existence and interdependence. This interdependence value places an emphasis on the group, not the individual. The collaborative behaviour is the dominant behavioural pattern that can be observed, especially in the rural community. The value of mutual help reinforces the sense of neighbourhood and the other-oriented community, and this brings values of interdependence (Komin, 1991). This Thai value also links to the collectivism in Hofstede's cultural dimension.

In the Thai rural community, from my experience, the relationship between teacher and pupils' parents are bound very much stronger in emotion than those in the capital city as a result of the interdependence and grateful relationship values. They rely on and help each other in many ways. For example, rural parents of pupils are the most grateful to their children's teachers as they educate their children. Accordingly, they often give meals or fresh food to their children's teacher, and will also provide any other types of help as a way of returning teachers' kindness. Likewise, teachers living in the neighbourhood of pupils' houses will volunteer to ride a motorcycle and transport pupils from their houses to school every day. Some parents who cannot pick their children up from school will ring the teachers and ask them to return their children to their homes as well. These are the relationships between parents and special education teachers found in their usual way of a rural life.

### **Implications of 'Paeng-pa Ah-sai' for Intensive Interaction Implementation**

There is a challenge for teachers to work with their pupils in a new way. If a teacher disagrees with the parents about the goal of teaching the pupils, they tend to accept the parents' goal rather than their own goals. The social smoothing interaction, grateful relationship and interdependence with pupils' parents are more important for many Thai teachers. The achievement of pupils may be considered as a subordinate matter. An awareness of the importance of remaining non-threatening to the interdependent relationship between the teacher, parents and others is involved.

### **Fun Pleasure: 'Sanuk'**

Anxiety in respect of uncertainty is, together with the emphasis on social harmony, recognised within Thai society as leading to another important social norm, *sanuk*. The concept of *sanuk* (the feeling of having fun, excitement or pleasure) is highlighted for relaxation. Mulder (1978) observed



that Thais have relaxed interaction, joyful behaviour and enjoy a pleasant atmosphere. He states “the Thai are masters of relaxation” (p.103). Komin (1991) explained that Thais use the fun-pleasure value or *sanuk* as keeping a pleasant and smooth interpersonal interaction, which is a higher value for Thais. This value can be observed from ‘light’ behaviours such as being easy-going, pleasant, humorous, and joyful, or making fun of all kinds of events. Showing a serious character is not highly valued for Thais and they tend to avoid any serious topic for discussions. When conversations are getting into serious arguments, Thais often bring in humour or jokes to decrease tension. Being *sanuk* is highly valued as a mechanism for relaxation and maintaining harmonious interactions in social groups. Komin (1991), however, stresses that the intensity of this fun-pleasure value or *sanuk* does not mean that Thais cannot be taken seriously. Rather, it means that, for Thais, to be successful in any work activities, they need to pay attention to *sanuk*. Hallinger and Kantamara (2003) suggest that making work fun is important for Thais. It will be difficult to engage in ongoing work if practitioners feel *mai sanuk* (have no fun). If new ways of working are perceived as ‘not fun’ this is likely to increase resistance to their introduction.

### Implications of ‘Sanuk’ for Intensive Interaction Implementation

*Sanuk* is likely to play an important part for Thai teachers to feel able to address new ways of working such as Intensive Interaction. The aspect of fun and pleasure, which is at the heart of Intensive Interaction, is also central to Thai culture.

*Sanuk* is a crucial element that has to be taken into consideration when working with Thai teachers. I had to consider my research to find ways to bring fun into work and to celebrate group accomplishments whilst maintaining work results.

## Conclusion

This chapter explored and discussed the range of cultural dimensions that may have an impact on developing new ways of working with children in the Thai special education system. Given that Intensive Interaction comes from a western orientation it was necessary to explicitly articulate cultural differences that work as the backdrop to understanding motivations for behaviours. Delving into the literature on definitions of culture and cultural dimensions has allowed me to present and highlight differences that exist in fundamental motivation for being and behaving in societies. Cultural understandings in relation to pedagogy have been set in context to allow the chapter to highlight how different cultural backgrounds can have an impact on the uptake of an educational approach such as Intensive Interaction.

Using the western societies of the UK and US as examples, the analysis from the Western perspective outlined five dimensions of the national culture and the differences between Thailand and the West. This discussion of diverse perspectives helped set the scene for understanding the complexities behind introducing Intensive Interaction to Thailand. It was clear that Thai culture is very complex and that its cultural norms and values are distinctly different from those held predominantly in the West. As Hofstede and Schien stated, however, there is no right or wrong, no better or worse culture. These cross cultural studies have, however, enabled me to articulate the differences and raise awareness of how such differences in Thai culture, values and assumptions might have implications for the introduction of Intensive Interaction.

It was evident that Thai values such as high power distance and body hierarchy could set up barriers to the implementation of Intensive Interaction, as teachers would have cultural opposition to taking the child's lead, being on the floor, etc. It was also evident, however, that other aspects of Thai cultural behaviours would support the introduction of this approach, such as

high power distance, collectivism, 'Kreng Jai' and 'Sanuk' values. Due to the complex nature of cultural imperatives in relation to social engagement, the research approach for this study needed to be carefully constructed to enable me to delve into that complexity. The next chapter discusses the search to find an appropriate methodological approach and the rationale behind decisions in relation to the use of a hermeneutic phenomenological approach.

## Chapter Four: Research Methodology

### Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to justify an appropriate methodology and method for my research inquiry. It first presents my philosophical perspective and position, which includes my ontological and epistemological stances, and locates my research exploration in relation to the interpretative paradigm. Next, an in-depth exploration of phenomenology is discussed and Heideggerian Hermeneutic phenomenology is adopted to gain insights into the teachers' perceptions and to provide their descriptive and interpretive accounts.

### Philosophical Perspectives

This section explores the research paradigm<sup>25</sup> and explains my philosophical perspective in this research to select a proper methodology and method in accordance with my inquiry and to locate my researcher's role in the development of knowledge. My philosophical position explains the understandings about the nature of reality (ontology), and my relationship with the social reality or knowledge I research—(epistemology), (Blaikie, 2007, p.13-14; p.18-19). The research was undertaken to explore perceptions of pedagogical implementation influenced by Thai cultural value systems. This exploration aims to understand cultural barriers and enablers

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<sup>25</sup> A paradigm is the basic set of beliefs defining a researcher's perspective to a world view. It contains four concepts: ethics, epistemology, ontology, and methodology (Denzin and Lincoln, 2000 p. 157).

to pedagogy developed from different cultures. In general, there are two research paradigms, broadly speaking in their principles and the characteristics of the data to be collected. One is quantitative research, based on positivist philosophy, and another on qualitative research, based on interpretivist philosophy.

Quantitative research views the nature of reality (ontology) as that all true knowledge really exists and can be discovered. Reality is seen as objective reality or fact which is stable and independent from time and context (Neumam, 2003). Positivists believe that human behaviour should be understood as objective, discernible, and measurable. Social reality is viewed as causal relations between variables that can be predicted and controlled (Blaikie, 1993; Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2007). In my research I look at the participants' pedagogical practice of Intensive Interaction from their point of view. I anticipated that they would perceive this phenomena differently and I believe in the idea of multiple realities (Creswell, 2007, p.16), where people view the world from different perspectives, and thus there is no objective reality or truth in social construction (Burr, 2003, p.152). The plurality of truths is related to different constructions of reality (Blaikie, 2007, p. 24-25). My participants' perceptions of Intensive Interaction implementation are associated with individual personalities and their backgrounds. There are a variety of thoughts, feelings and actions, which will result in the degree of achievement amongst my participants. The inquiry of my research is not to discover the meaning that already exists in the phenomena I study, and not to impose meaning on it (Blaikie, 2007, p. 18-19). The meaning is not fact, which is stable and independent from time and context. Rather, I believe that human nature changes over time under different situations (Crossan, 2003), 'because humans have processes and emotions' so they make plans, construct cultures and hold certain values and purposes (Strike, 1972, cited in Newman and Benz, 1998, p. 44). By taking a truth as situationally specific and as 'taken-for-granted knowledge', I understand that knowledge is relative, which is historically and culturally specific and dependent upon current social and economic factors in that culture at that time (Burr, 2003, p. 2-5).

The data of this study are not measured or judged. Human experience is seen as subjective and cannot be measured and translated into a statistical form as they are unable to succeed in representing or expressing my participants' perceptions. This study does not begin with hypotheses or relationships among variables. There was no attempt to control social environments under inquiry and to impose preconceptions of participants' social world before the research began. Instead, the research studied the natural settings of each participant. It looked deeply into an important quality of values, experiences, opinions, judgments and attitudes in participants' experiences to allow meanings to emerge from their own perspectives and circumstances.

Quantitative research perceives the relationship with knowledge (epistemology) as being derived from human sense experience, which does not interfere with the phenomena being studied, by means of observation, direct experiment and comparison that must be able to be proved (Cohen et al, 2007; Crossan, 2003; Crotty, 1998). I believe that meaning is constructed and as a researcher I actively participate in constructing knowledge (Blaikie, 2007, p. 19). My participants, as social actors, 'socially construct their reality' by conceptualising and interpreting 'their own actions and experiences, the actions of others and social situation', while I as a researcher, socially construct my knowledge of their realities, and the 'conceptions and interpretations of the actions of social actors and of social situation' (Blaikie, 2007, p. 22-23). The social reality I research is the outcome of a 'co-production' process, which is two levels of construction between me and my participants (Burr, 2003 p. 152). With this consideration it was necessary to seek another philosophical paradigm to gain an insight into the teacher's pedagogical experiences.

## The Interpretative Paradigm

Qualitative research based on the interpretivist paradigm originated from the tradition of phenomenology and hermeneutics (Blaikie, 1993). Interpretivism regards the nature of reality as social reality, not an objective truth that is a pre-existing fact waiting to be discovered. Instead, social realities exist as people experience them and give them a meaning. People construct their own reality by interacting with others in complex on-going processes of communication and negotiation. Social reality is interpretation based on individual inside experience (Blaikie, 1993; Cohen et al, 2007; Neuman, 2003). Interpretivism believes that people are not necessarily experiencing the exact same social reality. There is a possibility of the creation of different meaning by multiple interpretations of human experience, or multiple realities from different individuals in that there is no set of realities better than others (Newman and Benz, 1998; Neuman, 2003;). In the epistemology of interpretivism, knowledge is seen to be generated from the result of a social construction (Newman and Benz, 1998), which is closely linked to the epistemology of constructionism. In constructionism, knowledge (truth and meaning) is constructed by human beings in different ways (Gray, 2004) that depend on their context and natural attitudes, or all personal knowledge, as they engage with and interpret the world (Crotty, 1998).

This research paradigm is congruent with my philosophical orientation, which embraces the multiplicity of social reality. The interpretative paradigm allows me to 'gain access' to my participants' 'common-sense thinking', and then to interpret their actions, and explain their behaviour and their social world from their point of view (Bryman, 2008, p. 16). According to Bryman (2008, p. 17) there are three levels of interpretation, in that as a researcher I provide an interpretation of my participants' interpretations and in the third level, my interpretations are further interpreted by examining them with concepts, theories, and disciplinary literature. As a goal of Interpretivism, this enables me to develop an understanding of the subjective world of my participants'

experiences and to reveal the way they construct meaning in natural settings (Cohen, et al., 2007; Neuman, 2003).

In quantitative approaches the role of researchers is an outsider, as they attempt to detach, neutralise, and put aside emotions to achieve objectivity, which is contrary with role of researcher in the interpretative approach (Sciarra, 1999). Interpretive researchers carry out their research in fieldwork as insiders, attempting to minimise the distance from participants and make the values, as well as their personal interests, explicit (Creswell, 2007, p.17-18.). By making values explicit, I assume that all set of values are of equal importance (Newman and Benz, 1998).

An interpretive analysis of social reality has internal coherence and is rooted in the text, which refers to the meaningful everyday experiences of the people being studied (Neuman, 2003). This approach provides broad descriptions of phenomena. It is rich in detailed description by using multiple quotes presenting the actual words of different participants and different perspectives (Creswell, 2007, p. 17-18).

While allowing the exploration of participants' subjective perception is an advantage of interpretative research, as opposed to positivism, this point is also considered to be fallible. As qualitative inquiry is often considered that the researcher acts as the 'research instrument', critics have argued that the closeness of the researcher to the investigation may result in researcher bias which affects the findings validity and reliability. For example, the research question guides what one attends to, once a particular interpretation, explanation or theory has been developed by a researcher, he/she may tend to interpret data in terms of it, be on the lookout for data that would confirm it, or even shape the data production process in ways that lead to a potential error or he/she will interpret events solely from the point of view of particular participants (Hammersley and Gomm, 1997) (bias occurs and causes the research findings to deviate from a 'true' finding). Rosentha and Rosnow (1991 cited in Newman and Benz, 1998) argued that this notion is not



different from that of working hypotheses among empiricists who defined those hypotheses from theory or personal experiences.

I considered qualitative research more likely to explore the meaning of an experience than any quantitative research approach, and more directly connected to values, cultures and other factors that may play a significant part in the participants' circumstance. Because of this, a qualitative approach is the most appropriate to my research aims.

## **A Research Methodology**

A wide range of methodologies and methods are employed within qualitative research. Grounded theory, ethnography and phenomenology are approaches considered as potential to investigate in this inquiry. According to this worldview, however, hermeneutic phenomenology was adopted as the qualitative research paradigm and the most suitable methodology for the research aims. Hermeneutic phenomenology is the philosophy underpinning both phenomenology and hermeneutics (Van Manen, 1990). A methodology of hermeneutic phenomenology is widely used in nursing research (Whitehead, 2003) and education research (Van Manen, 1995). The following paragraphs provide a brief overview of the philosophies of phenomenology and hermeneutics.

### **Phenomenology: Philosophy of Edmund Husserl**

Phenomenology is derived from the Greek word *phainomenon*, meaning the appearance of things or phenomena (Spinelli, 1989, p.2 cited in Ehrich, 2003). Phenomenology mainly emphasises and focuses on describing the phenomena rather than explaining, where phenomena relates to anything that occurs and could be visibly observed, such as thoughts and emotions

(Ehrich, 2003). Phenomenological research is “*the study of lived experience*” or the life world aiming to identify and describe the subjective experiences of people from their world views (Van Manen, 1997, p.9). The task of the phenomenologist is to attempt to unfold and describe meaning as the individual experiences them (Ehrich, 2003; Lavery, 2003).

The idea of phenomenology was first presented by Edmund Husserl, a German philosopher and mathematician in the late nineteenth-century. Husserl is often credited as the founder or father of phenomenology (Cohen, 1987; Ehrich, 2003; Koch, 1996; Lavery, 2003; Polkinghorne, 1983). While scientific realists’ contribution prioritises the significance of the natural sciences’ reality, Husserl countered that experience – which was seen as less important by the previous group – is the base of building knowledge (Cohen and Omery, 1994). He theorised that experience as perceived by human consciousness has value and should be an object of scientific studies. From this perspective, it was a turning point from scientific knowledge to the ‘things themselves’ (Husserl, 1970, cited in Ehrich, 2003, p. 46).

Husserl proposed a method of free variation which led the investigator to a description of the essential structures of the phenomena. He saw assumptions or ‘mechanistic causation’ as unnecessary, but directly grasping the process done by the human intentionally (Lavery, 2003). Therefore, the main focus for Husserl’s work was the study of phenomena as they appeared through consciousness, which was one’s knowledge of reality (Lavery, 2003). His philosophy is based on the belief that human experiences are caused by the essence of an experience which would be found in consciousness (Cohen and Omery, 1994; Draucker, 1999; Koch, 1999). Husserl developed a method in order to achieve essence or pure truth, which was independent from historical and social complex involution. When applying this method, human consciousness and the goal of phenomenology is freed from presuppositions or the world and thus is able to grasp meaning in its true essence (Blaikie, 1993). An important method of Husserl’s phenomenology was *epoche* or phenomenological reduction. To

develop the epoche, Husserl claimed that the intrinsic viewpoint must be left blank or refrained. This means the researcher must suppress any '*natural attitudes* or all prior personal knowledge' (bracketing) before conducting the data collection phase to apprehend the focal essential experience being studied (Cohen and Omery, 1994; Draucker, 1999). This is to ensure the experience description will not contaminate the theoretical or other prejudices (Merleau-Ponty, 1962, cited in Ehrich, 2003), and to ascertain that 'the things themselves' can be returned to (Ehrich, 2003, p. 46).

Critics felt that Husserl's phenomenology shares more common points with positivism because he studied phenomena under the faith that reality and its truths are within individuals' lived experiences (Polit and Hungler 1997; Rolef, 2006). This exploration of the 'essence' of a phenomenon does not differ from what Denzin and Lincoln described as the assumptions of positivists or realists, that 'there is a reality out there to be studied, captured, and understood' (Denzin and Lincoln 1998, p. 8–9), which the researcher can discover by 'bracketing out the natural attitudes and any presuppositions in an effort to deal with the data in pure form' (Polit and Hungler 1997; Rolef, 2006). The theory of Husserl was criticised and revised into Hermeneutic-phenomenology by Heidegger.

### **Hermeneutic: Philosophy of Martin Heidegger**

Hermeneutics has its roots in the interpretation of biblical texts (O'Reilly, 2009), which focuses on 'a detailed reading or examination of text', including communication through verbal, written and illustrated methods (Neuman, 2003 p. 75). A hermeneutic phenomenologist conducts 'a reading' to uncover meanings embedded within a text by putting herself in the place of the text author and brings her subjective experience to it in order to understand the person and the situation more fully (Barritt et al., 1985, p. 22 cited in Ehrich, 2003; Neuman, 2003). The researcher tries to understand the insider attitude

as a whole during studying the text, then developed deeper comprehension of how each part relates to the whole (Neuman, 2003).

The phenomenology tradition was revised into the hermeneutic version of phenomenology by Martin Heidegger, a German philosopher, who was Husserl's personal assistant at Freiburg University (Ehrich, 2003). Heidegger worked with Husserl, who trained him in the processes of phenomenological intentionality and reduction. While Husserl's start was in science, Heidegger had a background in theology (Lavery, 2003). Similar to phenomenology, hermeneutic phenomenology focused on experiences as human lives and looked toward the details relevant to knowledge increasing within experience that may occur in our lives, with an aim to establish meaning and achieve sensible understanding (Lavery, 2003; Wilson and Hutchinson, 1991).

'A free assumption method' is an idea Heidegger found attractive in Husserl's work to understand phenomena (Blaikie, 1993 p.34). Nevertheless, Husserl's concept of transcendental phenomenology was argued by Heidegger as he insisted 'being' could not be clarified by subjectivity so it is not transcendental (Ehrich, 2003:52). Husserl and Heidegger had different opinions on how lived experience exploration progresses: Husserl emphasized studying beings or phenomena whilst Heidegger spotlighted 'Dasein', which means 'the mode of being human' or 'the situated meaning of a human in the world' (Lavery, 2003). Heidegger's works have been classified into two categories: 'existential phenomenology', and 'hermeneutic phenomenology' (Ehrich, 2003; Spinelli, 1989).

For Heidegger, understanding is a mode of being rather than knowledge. It is not about how we establish knowledge; it is about how human beings exist in the world (Blaikie, 1993). Heidegger emphasizes the importance of 'being in the world' and 'in relation to' something (social, culture, and political contexts) and believed that one's reality is invariably influenced by the world in which he or she lives. Unlike Husserl, Heidegger insisted that being cannot be bracketed or set aside. He saw that being is present in all persons and was

more important than consciousness (McCall, 1983:61, cited in Ehrich, 2003:52), and that thoughts toward the world could only be formulated from being in the world. Under these circumstances, his opinions differed from Husserl's (Spinelli, 1989, p.108).

Rather than a description of essence, Heidegger aimed to explain in order to reach understanding of human beings. Being a human basically requires understanding which is rooted in any social relationship (Blaikie, 1993). To achieve understanding, the key process is to interpret 'being there' from the participant's experience. Hermeneutic phenomenology studies how people interpret their lives and create meanings of what they experience. This point of view is to look for multiple realities or the complexity of views rather than to narrow meaning into a universal essence of Husserl's phenomenology. For Husserl, all of the researcher's prior personal knowledge was a barrier to true understanding, and thus his phenomenology stresses bracketing to see the phenomenon clearly. Conversely, Heidegger argues that it is impossible to rid the mind of the researcher's background or bracketing, but offers the use of a theoretical framework both from literature and researchers' knowledge to interpret the findings. Gadamer (2007), Heidegger's former student and another prominent philosopher within the hermeneutic tradition who extended Heidegger's work into practical application, states that

Hermeneutics has to do with a theoretical attitude toward the practice of interpretation, the interpretation of texts, but also to the relation to the experiences interpreted in them and in our communicatively unfolded orientations to the world (p. 245).

Heidegger clearly recognised that history is viewed as it was from the inside not the outside. All understanding is temporal. Interpretation is not the preserve of the expert, but it is a part of every life. Rather than being a search for truth, it is the opening up of potential (Blaikie, 1993). The following section describes Being and Time, an essential theoretical perspective of Heidegger's phenomenology.

## Being and Time: The Principle of an Interpretation

Heidegger (1927), in his book *Being and time*, explained his interpretation of the meaning of being. In *Being and time*, Heidegger described *Dasein* as a fundamental concept. *Dasein*, a German word, presents a concept of a person's 'Being-in-the-world' (Koch, 1999), or 'the situated meaning of a human in the world' (Lavery, 2003). Heidegger stated that 'the essence of Dasein lies in its existence' (Heidegger 1962, p. 67). Therefore the states of Dasein are considered as directly related to its existence and this is the process that Dasein comes truly into 'Being'. Heidegger contended that 'we are being inseparable from an already existing world' (Draucker, 1999). The person and the world are *co-constituted*, which cannot be taken apart. Accordingly, we make sense of our world from within our existence, while not separated from it (Annells, 1996). The term of the world is used to refer to a personal world existing in the self, not a geographical place. Heidegger remarked that 'being' demonstrates itself in a unique characteristic and is always fluctuating accordingly to world circumstances, or 'activity being-in-the-world'. Humans constantly live their lives hermeneutically, trying to discover and understand meaning (Draucker, 1999). Heidegger concentrated on the importance of Dasein 'in relation to' something (the world) such as social, cultural, and political contexts. He believed that the world that we live in always influences our reality. Therefore, he disagreed with the idea that 'we are observing subjects separated from the world of objects about which we try to gain knowledge'.

Heidegger shared his view that consciousness cannot be detached from the world because it historically forms lived experience. He believed that understanding is a basic form of human existence because understanding is the way we are in the world. A person's history or background includes what a culture gives a person from birth and it presents the ways of understanding the world. From Heidegger's viewpoint, pre-understanding is the cultural sense or knowledge organisation existing before we understand and later becomes a part of our historical background. Pre-understanding is known as

already here in the world with us while meaning is discovered when we are raised by the world at the same time as we build the world from what we have known and learnt. Individuals have some connections with the world as they constitute and are constituted. Heidegger emphasised that being a human is to interpret - a significant process to understand that which is strongly influenced by individual's background and experience (Lavery 2003, citing many authors).

### **Implication of Being and Time**

Heidegger's description of humans as 'Beings in the world' or the 'Being as it is' provides an excellent background for me in order to interact with and understand the experience of Thai teachers adopting unfamiliar pedagogy into their routine educational activities. It became clear that teachers' existence in a new pedagogical experience is forming 'meaning' or 'reality' as they are in their own situation, which is individual and unique. In this study, Thai teachers referred to Dasein or teachers who are 'being-there'. The practice of a new innovation or Intensive Interaction is a part of their world, which has the possibility of being merged into or against their old world. As Heidegger stated, "Dasein has always made some sort of decision as to the way in which it is in each case mine" (Heidegger 1962, p.68). Therefore, the decision of each teacher towards this experience is made in the way it is related to their personal world, including their historical background and culture. To fully understand these teachers' experiences, it is not description that is required, but an interpretive process. Importantly, such teachers' experiences may change according to their existence. It is essential to interpret the essence of being in a new teaching role to find the hidden meaning in their experiences to arrive at the understanding of this study.

Both Husserl and Heidegger searched to disclose the human lived experience, but used different approaches and ways to explore it. Husserl wished to establish a pure truth independently from socio-historical situations

in human being. All prior personal knowledge of the researcher was seen as a barrier to the true understanding. Thus, Husserl's phenomenology demanded us to set aside the natural attitude, to bracket absolutely everything from our involvement in our world in order to free our consciousness to see the phenomenon clearly and grasp the truth (Blaikie, 1993). Through the process of bracketing, Husserl believed that we will reach the objective truth of description against the self-interest of the researcher (Kock, 1995). Conversely, Heidegger insisted that Dasein was a part in the world of being that cannot be separated (Annella, 1996). Consciousness is formed by what we have experienced culturally and we cannot divide it from ourselves. His opinion on Dasein was moderately average as we are normal, just like others, and not 'an exceptional person' who could be prominent from an ordinary position (Blaikie, 1993 p.34). Heidegger contributed that as we already lived in the world, we could not eliminate the mind of the researcher's background or bracketing. Pre-understanding and historical experience has some influence on reality and is considered a co-constitution unity that cannot be taken apart (Knock, 1995). Heidegger's phenomenology emphasised understanding, rather than description. He mentioned that experiences can only be understood through one's background, or historically, and the social context of the experience (Draucker, 1999). Therefore, he offers the use of a theoretical framework both from literature and researchers' knowledge to interpret the data. Heidegger recognised that there is no interpretation without a presupposition to grasp meaning. All understanding is temporal and taken-for-granted assumptions should be recognised (Blaikie, 1993 p.36). Heidegger proposed that this understanding should be the opening up of possibilities, rather than being a search for some fact (Heidegger, 1962).

In this study, I found it was not beneficial to set aside my pre-understanding and my interest in the investigation. The nature of this research is to introduce and develop teachers' knowledge and the skills for a new pedagogy of Intensive Interaction. It is the process to construct their experiences and understand it as a part of their world. Through my own background as a lecturer interested in teaching children with autism and SLD



through play activities, with some knowledge and skills of Intensive Interaction, I believed that I should use my knowledge and background in order to come to the same understanding with the teachers of what we are exploring together. In the stage of an interpretation to understand my research findings, I truly believe that it will be most useful to recall a theoretical framework both from relevant literature and my knowledge to merge toward the interpretation of the research findings. This is because the teachers' interpretations about the action of a new pedagogy may involve an analysis of various contexts. In this study, although the teachers share the same career and are in the same culture, they vary in teaching experience background, preferred teaching style, workplace circumstance and capability to adopt a new teaching approach. These various factors that shape and formulate the teachers' experiences may make it difficult for them to articulate the reason they feel the way they do about the new world. However, my interpretation of this experience may be different from that of a researcher who approaches it with a mind clear of any pre-understanding of these knowledge backgrounds. However, I am fully aware of the need not to impose my perspective and interest on these teachers' experiences. Accordingly, I accepted, described and interpreted the data from their perspective, and from their reality as they felt about their teaching experiences. This appeared in analysing sessions and the trustworthiness of the research. As Heidegger stated, interpretation is "the working-out of possibilities projected in understanding" (Heidegger, 1962, p. 189). I recognise that rather than discovering some fact or truth, my interpretation is an attempt to seek the existential possibility to understand the teachers' experiences how they make sense of the world. Finally, I acknowledged that my understanding is temporary and might be changed in the future. The next section describes a 'hermeneutic circle', an interpretative process for working out how to understand my participants' experiences.

## Hermeneutic Circle: An Interpretative Process

The goal of hermeneutic phenomenology is to understand experience as it is lived. This understanding is the development of the interpretive process, involving the concept of the hermeneutic circle. This methodology has enabled me to acquire a deeper knowledge by connecting the interpretation to historical theory based on past and present existing understanding.

The hermeneutic circle is a metaphor taken from Heidegger to describe the process of understanding a text between the part and the whole (Koch, 1996). It explains the idea that a person's understanding of the text as a whole is started by the individual parts and a person's understanding of each individual part by the whole. The whole text can be understood by moving between the part and the whole and thus it is a circular process (Gadamer, 1979). Leonard (1989 p. 50) defines her understanding of the hermeneutic circle in another way linked to sharing culture and language:

...One is thus always within the hermeneutic circle of interpretation. Researcher and research participant are viewed as sharing common practices, skills, interpretations, and everyday practical understanding by virtue of their common culture and language.

When engaged in the hermeneutic circle process, Hans-Georg Gadamer (1979) uses the concept of 'horizon' to speak of how understanding takes place between the interpreter and the text. The horizon is considered as an essential part for any person to possess when she or he is seeking to understand. Gadamer defines the horizon as "the range of vision that includes everything that can be seen from a particular vantage point" (1979, p. 269). A vantage point can be defined as a given set of fore-structures, the notions of background, co-constitution and preconceptions offered by Heidegger, or the concept of prejudice the term used by Gadamer. Heidegger and Gadamer considered fore-structures or prejudice as a

vantage point which is needed for hermeneutic understanding to be made. Gadamer (1979) stated that prejudice is not something negative we need to remove; instead, we have accessed the world through our prejudices. Prejudices are not necessarily distortions of truth. In fact, it is the historical condition of our existence that is brought to us in the research process and these help us to understand. Heidegger and Gadamer asserted that rather than suspending or eliminating it, prejudice should be taken to the world in order for it to be examined, corrected and modified.

Gadamer and Heidegger maintained that prejudices are framed into the personal 'horizon,' which encompasses the background history and *frame of reference*. The sphere of the horizon is thus created by history, both personal and socio-cultural. This is the wide range of vision that a person brings to the text in order to seek understanding of it. Thompson (1990), likewise, stated that prejudice, a fore-structure or a condition of knowledge, establishes what we may find comprehensible in any given situation. The fore-structures are a formation of a social frame of reference including gender, culture, ethnicity, and class. The vantage point then covers, as analysed by Thompson, 'what we find as intelligible given our specific cultured perspectives and our place in history' (1990, p. 245 cited in Annells, 1996).

Gadamer (1979, p. 269) also suggested that a person without horizon is a person with a very limited vision. That person can thus only see what is nearest to him, and nothing else beyond it. They are not in the right horizon and will misunderstand the significance of what the text says to us. Noel (1996) develops this by noting that a person who lacks horizon will not be flexible, yet would remain with his fixed opinion. The person will not see beyond his limited view and is not aware of multiple perspectives that can be on the same events. Consequently, the person is able to connect only with people of his social group.

However, Gadamer (1979, p. 271) also asserted that horizons are temporal and always in motion. "The historical movement of human life consists of the

fact that it is never utterly bound to any one standpoint, and hence can never have a truly closed horizon". Accordingly, it is possible to expand the range of vision towards a new horizon. Gadamer also advised that the acquisition of a new horizon requires seeing something better within a larger whole. This needs formation between the horizons of the present and the past. This process was described as 'a fusion of horizon', another metaphor for understanding that always occurs through the interpretative process (Koch, 1996). This philosophy has been offered by Gadamer to hermeneutics (Annells, 1996).

The process leading to horizon fusion is a way to place ourselves in one situation and imagine the other. It is a readiness to open ourselves to the perspective of others so that we can allow their perspective to speak to us, and let it influence us. Fusion is not empathy for others, but it involves the achievement of a higher universality that overcomes both our own horizon and that of others (Gadamer, 1979 p. 272). The horizons are fused where the multi-voices of the others are respected. The success of understanding is to show how a fusion of horizon has happened. Like conversation, however, in order to achieve the right horizon of enquiry, it does not mean that we are seeking agreement with a person's standpoint, but means we get to know a person's horizon. "We have discovered the standpoint and horizon of the other persons; his ideas became intelligible, without our necessarily having to agree with him..." (Gadamer, 1979 p. 270).

According to Gadamer, horizon is a continuous fusion from history to the present. The relationship between interpreter and interpreted is wholly dependent on historical time. In order to open up our own beliefs, we must first recognise the history of comprehension that dominates all our prejudices (Rapport, 2001). By disregarding historical understanding, we are distorting our knowledge foundation, but by letting historical understanding speak to us, we are clarifying its true meaning (Hekman, 1986, cited in Rapport, 2001). Within this interpretive process, our prejudices are being challenged and confronted. It is necessary that our prejudices be continually examined,

modified and formed. Walsh (1996) added that the interpretative process of fusing horizons is *circular* with no beginning or end. Some prejudices can be considered true and can lead us on to comprehension, while others can be wrong and lead to misunderstanding (Gadamer, 1979). It is important to work with our prejudices hermeneutically, not to break out and reduce them. Through this, an entire portion of perception is 'understanding oneself, one's culture and one's biases'. Koch (1996, p. 176) stressed that in hermeneutical inquiry 'data generated by the participant is fused with the experience of research and placed in context,' which she pointed out was the 'co-constitution of data'.

Understanding has the characteristic of hermeneutical conversation which is central to the question and answer (Gadamer, 1979). Understanding exists when we let the questions and answers flow. The text could only become an interpretation object when it asks the interpreter's question. It leads us to a new discovery, not something already recognised (Thompson, 1990, cited in Koch, 1996 p.176).

Heidegger (1962/2007, p. 195) suggested that all correct interpretation must be free of *fancies and popular conceptions*, but we rather make the scientific theme protected by working out the fore-structures in the sphere of 'the things themselves'. The process of producing new projections is the movement of understanding and interpretation which is based on the constant revision of our *fore-project* (Gadamer, 1979). In every such revision the *fore-project* is "capable of projecting before itself a new project of meaning, that rival projects can emerge side by side until it becomes clearer what the unity of meaning is, that interpretation begins with fore-conceptions that are replaced by more suitable ones" (Heidegger, 1962/2007). Gadamer (1979, p. 236) asserted that we must not be distracted from *fore-meanings* that do not emerge from the author of text. He also confirmed Heidegger's idea that "we have understood that our *first, last and constant task* is gazing on *things themselves*".

## Implications of Hermeneutic Circle

The explanation of the hermeneutic circle supplies an outstanding knowledge base for me to interpret my data and formulate my comprehension. The hermeneutic circle allowed me to bring my own horizon or fore-structure, which is the starting point of the study, into the interpretation of the participants' words. The concept of horizon assists me in the recognition of the sphere of my historical and present horizon, and allows me to place myself in it. My horizon includes the history of my knowledge of pedagogy for children with autism and SLD, the perspective of training the teachers and my pre-understanding of the social structure of Thai culture. The horizons of the teachers in the study would include the social context, personality, and historical and cultural horizons. It is clear to me that, although I have a horizon to some extent, this is needed to expand into the larger whole in order to understand the enquiry to be achieved. Throughout my active involvement with the teachers, characteristics of my fore-structure came constantly to mind and caused me to reflect on the text. My fore-structure has been examined, corrected and constantly formed as new horizons, which means this new horizon facilitates me in gaining a far deeper understanding into teachers' experiences. As articulated by Heidegger, this is the shared social practices of the group that underline the social meaning of a new experience (Heidegger 1962/2007). The teachers and I shared some spheres of horizons. We are in the same social structural culture, which helped me to connect the meanings behind their words. In this sense, I believe that this might be missed by someone from a different social contextual horizon as she/he might be in a too-far different horizon to be fused.

On the other hand, my own horizons have challenged me in another way during the research process. It was difficult to become detached from my Thai culture. I, as a Thai, was to focus on the teachers' new world as a person from a very greatly different social context. When I conducted interviews, I had a little recognition of some different perspectives between

the teachers and myself, but mostly I felt normal in Thai culture. The issue was raised when my research supervisory team looked into some parts of my English transcripts and started to ask questions. The problem became more obvious after all my interviews were transcribed and I started to read and interpret the teachers' words. In this interpretive process, I constantly asked and answered questions of my own enquiries. I found that my vision of answering the 'why' questions is vague. As Heidegger stated, we know our fore-structure, but it is hard for us to make it clear. This was reflected in my prejudice about Thai culture as an insider where we are in it but not able to distinguish or see it clearly. During the interpretation, I have explored my projection through reviewing the relevant literature to find the right meaning in my transcripts. Through this process, I was expanding and forming a new horizon in order to reach a wider range of vision and allowing the fusion of my past and present to occur. The perspective from both the Thais and the western scholars provided new horizons and these assisted my prejudice to blend into the teachers' words. In other words, the multi-perspective of scholars in the literature helped me to get to know the horizon of the teachers and understand them. Each of the research themes was examined and commented on by my supervisory team for guidance upon further exploration of some relevant issues. They are based in the western context and have knowledge of the Thai cultural context from reading my reviewed literature and discussions with me. This process produced a unique comprehension into the research topic, as two different perspectives were integrated during data interpretation: the standpoints of the Thai teachers as I represented, and the standpoints of people from different social backgrounds as represented by many scholars in referenced literature and my supervisory team. To achieve trustworthiness, this study needs to merge these two standpoints into an integrated interpretation of every meaning concerning this experience.

I was greatly aware that during the analysis process, I was to place and imagine myself in the teachers' horizon. I was not to place the teachers in my own criteria or to force my horizon onto them, but to enable the teachers' own voices of their experiences to be heard and respected. As Gadamer

(1979, p.272) stated, placing ourselves “always involves the attainment of higher universality that overcomes, not only our own particularity, but also that of the other”. It is also important to say that my understanding of the teachers presented in this research means that I have tried to discover their standpoint and their horizon from their own experiences, and not to seek the agreement or argument with them. It is impossible to place myself in the exact same horizon as my participants. According to Benner (1994, p.19), “when we are able to understand the situation of other people, it is not because we are able to look deeply into their souls but because we are able to imagine their life world”.

## Conclusion

In this chapter, I have located my philosophical orientation, which embraces multiple realities and social constructions and led me into the adoption of an interpretative paradigm. With this paradigm, I chose hermeneutic phenomenology as the methodology to answer my research questions. Hermeneutic-phenomenological methodology has provided understanding about the principle of an interpretation and orientation of interpretative process, as well as data analysis. As an hermeneutical inquirer, I bring my horizon such as my knowledge, personal interests, and historical and cultural aspects, to the ‘field’ and take the role of insider learner to participate actively by sharing, reflecting and learning with my participants. I need to examine, correct and modify my prejudice during the field work and this process is also required in the data analysis process to gaze on ‘things themselves’, or to arrive at the understanding of my participants’ experiences of a new pedagogy in their own perspectives. The next chapter discusses the research design and research method for data collection.



## **Chapter Five: Research Design**

### **Introduction**

This chapter provides a discussion of the research design. It first describes the method of selecting and accessing teacher participants, and the training intervention strategies. Ethical considerations are described in the process of conducting the research. I position my role of researcher as insider learner for supporting and developing teachers and learning with them, balancing the role of being an outsider expert to try to understand their new social world. The chapter then explains the process of developing teachers' practice and moves to the discussion of the method for collecting data, which comprises repeated semi-structured in-depth interviews, active participant observations and focus group interviews. The process of data analysis, a consideration of the trustworthiness of the study and critical reflections on doing my research in the Thai context are provided.

### **Research Design**

In the previous section, the discussion of the reason for choosing Heideggerian hermeneutic phenomenology was described as the philosophical perspective in congruence with the research question. The research aim was to understand the perceptions of teaching with a new pedagogy. The study was intended to explore the significant cultural factors that might have a significant impact on the ability of Intensive Interaction to be used in the Thai context. It intended to find out the positive factors that promote Intensive Interaction and any significant factors that might

negatively affect its use in the Thai cultural context. The research objectives were to explore:

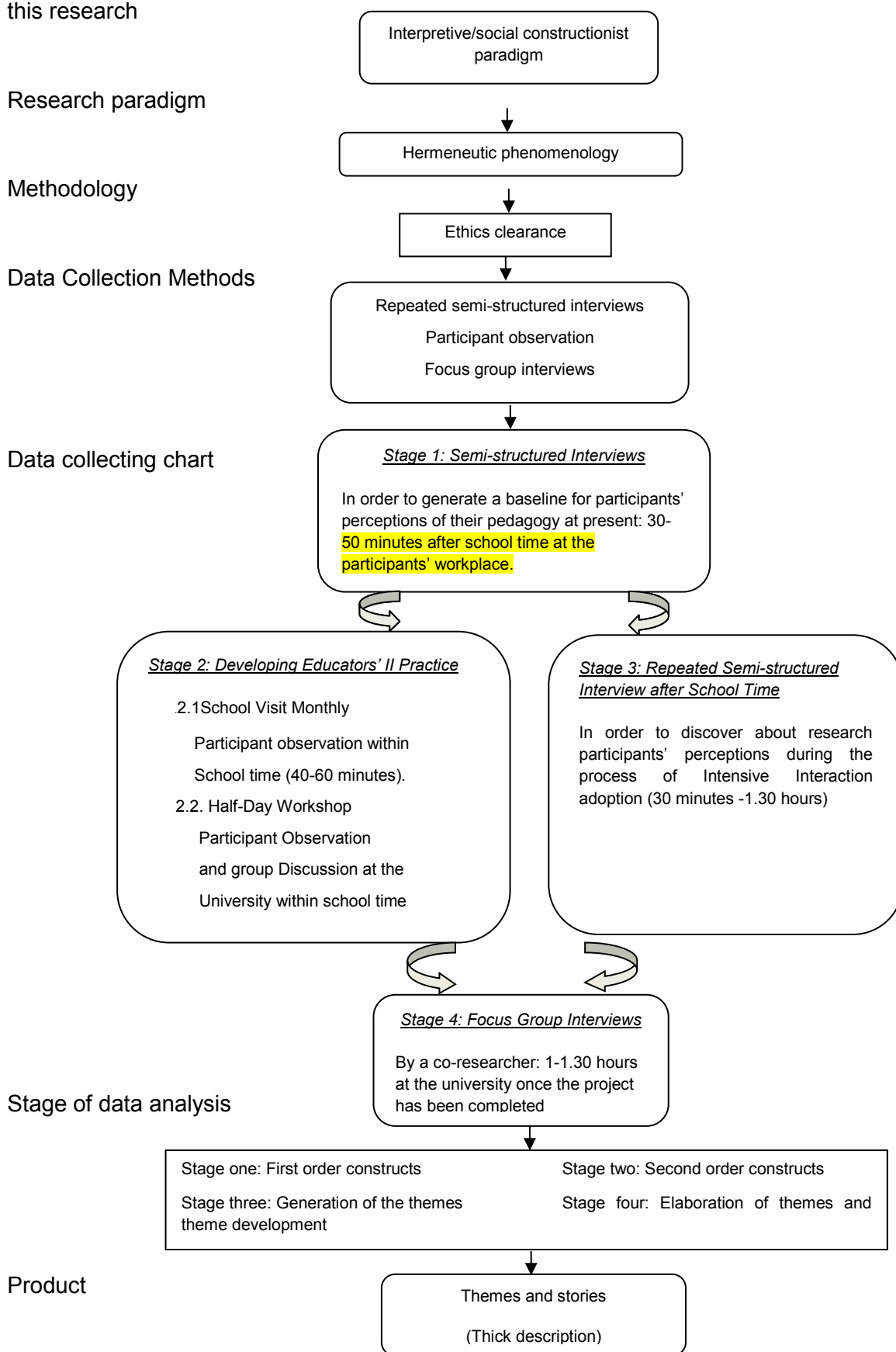
1. How Thai teachers perceive Intensive Interaction as an approach to work with pupils with autism and SLD in the Thai context.
2. The key aspects in Thai culture that influence the adoption of Intensive Interaction
3. The factors which encourage or discourage the use of the Intensive Interaction approach in the Thai school context.
4. The actions needed for Intensive Interaction to be more compatible with Thai teachers and their schools.

Figure 5.1 demonstrates an overview of the research approach and the actions taken in conducting this research. It includes the research paradigm and methodology that were adopted, the data collecting chart, the stage of data analysis and the product of the themes and stories that were undertaken.

## **Recruitment Process**

The participants were recruited from those who had completed a two-day training course of Intensive Interaction. In this recruiting process, the training course was conducted to introduce Intensive Interaction and invited interested teachers to participate in the research. The training days were held in the Nakhon Ratchasima Rajabhat University (NRRU), which was also where the researcher works. This university was selected as the location of the two-day training course as one of the missions of the Special Education Centre of the university is to offer in-service training for teachers involved with students with SEN in the community. The director of the Special Education Centre and the head of the special education programme were interested in Intensive Interaction and placed the two-day training course of Intensive Interaction into an implementation plan for community services at the university. The training project was funded by the university.

**Figure 5.1:** An overview of the research approach and actions taken in conducting this research



In order to invite interested teachers to attend the two-day training course, the Dean of the Education faculty and the Director of the centre at NRRU sent invitation letters to the five school directors to ask them to inform interested teachers in their organizations to attend the training course. This process was culturally co-operated between the Dean, the Director, the staff in the university, and the organization outside the university in keeping with Thai tradition. The researcher was not involved in the invitation process as my position was now considered as an outsider and inappropriate for formal contact with government organizations. At this stage, twenty-five teachers attended the Intensive Interaction training course.

### **Preparing Training Materials or a Two-day Training Course**

The training course was conducted by the researcher. I am keenly aware that I am not an experienced practitioner or expert in the Intensive Interaction pedagogy, but I am eager to learn. I have constantly studied Intensive Interaction since I was a first-year PhD student. Intensive Interaction was of particular interest as it corresponded well with my personality. I have studied Intensive Interaction from books, journals, and videos footage. I also attended a one-day training course run by one of the pioneers of the approach, Dr. Dave Hewett in Edinburgh, Scotland in 2006 and received a certificate for attendance. My background is as a senior lecturer interested in the development of a group of pupils with autism and SLD for teaching teacher students in the university for nearly ten years, and I have worked with and supervised teachers for many years. My knowledge of Intensive Interaction and my teaching experience should allow me to run the Intensive Interaction training course for the participating teachers and to work together with the group of participating teachers.

Preparing training materials and activities for recruitment is a very important stage. I recognised that the preparation is as important as the activities during training and after training, as they have an impact on the effectiveness of training outcomes and the recruitment of volunteers to participate in the

research project (Salas and Bowers, 2001). The training materials were prepared as best as I could. Three months before the training day, I spent time translating from English into Thai two books and one note book of Intensive Interaction that I received from the training course. I translated some part of the theory underpinning Intensive Interaction in the book 'Access to Communication: Developing basic communication with people who have severe learning difficulties' (Nind and Hewett, 2005) and translated the book 'A Practical Guide to Intensive Interaction (Nind and Hewett, 2001) almost entirely. I also added some parts of the notes from the Intensive Interaction Course. They were combined as a handbook in the Thai Language for myself and then were summarized in the form of a handbook of Intensive Interaction to distribute to attendees for more detailed reading and to remind them about the Intensive Interaction approach after the training course. In my experience, a strong desire to collect or write down information from a training course is the nature of Thai teachers. The handbook would help them focus more on the training activity than jotting down information in their books. Aside from the handbook, the following materials were prepared: 84 slides of PowerPoint presentation, a worksheet for group work, an Intensive Interaction DVD (Hewett, 2006a) and a VDO clip of 'Contact' (Zeedyk, 2006) with Thai subtitles, and Thai song.

### Training Intervention Strategies

In the two-day training course, I conveyed knowledge to educators by combining traditional Thai methods and a new teaching strategy. The Thai traditional teaching approach is direct instruction, which is very familiar to Thai people and means plenty of knowledge can be presented in less time. Multimedia was incorporated as a new instruction strategy to extend the ability of presenting materials, in the form of Power Point presentations, DVDs, Video clips, radio clips and internet presentations. The multimedia presentation conveyed information quickly and kept the trainees alert and focused (Savage and Vogel, 1996). Indeed, video modelling has been found to be an effective strategy to help teachers learn (Pryor and Bitter, 2008).

Importantly, in the training intervention I encouraged the attendees to take a more active role in learning by emphasising the technique of asking questions. Asking questions would allow them to think, predict and exchange ideas and, thus, promote a dynamic learning environment as much as possible (Orlich, Harder, Callahan, Trevisan and Brown, 2009, p. 214-245). As the individual responds to information differently, the combination of these strategies should maximize the learning experience more than any single method. Handbooks and handouts of Intensive Interaction were distributed to all of the attendees.

Twenty-five teachers from five schools in the Nakhon Ratchasima province participated in the training course. None had been previously trained in Intensive Interaction. The open event was kindly presented by the Dean of education faculty and the Director of the special education centre. All attendees were provided with refreshments and lunch funded by the university. They all also received Northumbria University pens as souvenirs. At the end of the two-day training course, all attendees received souvenirs and certificates, which could be added to their portfolios as evidence for teacher-professional development. This was a new government policy with which all teachers were required to conform. We also took photographs together and had a happy experience.

Following this, teachers interested in taking part in the research received information sheets and consent forms (see appendix V and VI). I explained what the research study was about and what was required of them. They then were offered up to ten days to think about it and were encouraged to call me with any question they may have or to confirm their participation. This recruiting process was carried out in three weeks. Those who volunteered to participate in the research and who met the criteria below were part of the follow-up research project.

**There were five criteria for selecting study participants as follows:**

1. They had students with autism and SLD who were in pre-verbal or early verbal stage in their classroom and their parents gave consent for their children to be taught with the Intensive Interaction approach.
2. They had been working at the same workplace for at least eight months.
3. They had permission from their director or principal teacher to participate in the research as the researcher had to visit their schools once a month.
4. They were able to visit the university to attend a half-day workshop once a month.
5. Their schools were not too far from my university, not more than 15-40 minutes' drive, in order that I could travel to meet them regularly.

Six teachers from four schools immediately gave consent to volunteer in the research project, but one teacher left before the research project began due to personal problems.

## **Research Study Participants**

This research was conducted with a group of ten female teachers and one male teacher, aged between 25 and 35 years, from three working places in Nakhon Ratchasima, a province in the north east of Thailand. All of the participants taught pupils with autism and SLD. All the teachers were special education class teachers including six teachers from the Special Education Centre at Ratchasima Rajabhat University (NRRU), three teachers from the Special Education Centre Region 11 and two teachers from regular primary schools. Regarding formal education, all teachers had at least a graduate degree in education; nine of these teachers had a background in special education, one in English language teaching, and one in physical education. Two participants had a postgraduate degree and two were studying on a postgraduate programme. The teachers had worked in the field of special education for 1-12 years. The demographic information of the participants is

shown below in table 5.1. All the teachers agreed to take part in this research, being clearly aware of the research aims and procedures. All volunteers were supported by their directors to take part in this research. The pupils who had enrolled in these schools had autism and SLD.

In qualitative research, the number of participants is determined by the methodology adopted to explore the topic. The nature of this research intended to provide a thick description of the teachers' experiences, and did not require a large sample size of participants. Therefore, this number was sufficient for this type of research to deepen understandings of Intensive Interaction practice as experienced by participants (Creswell, 2007). It also allowed effective monitoring as teachers developed understandings in their new practices which helped answer my research questions.

**Table 5.1: The number of participants in three research sites according to number, teacher pseudonym, sex, seniority and education**

Research Sites	Number	Addition <sup>26</sup>	Total
Special Education Centre at URRN	5	1	6
Special Education Centre Regionxxx	3	-	3
Regular Schools	1	1	2
Total	9	2	11

Participant	Number	Addition	Total
Female	8	2	10
Male	1	-	1
Total	9	2	11

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<sup>26</sup> Participants take part after the teaching project has already been started.



<b>Teacher Pseudonym</b>	<b>Seniority: Teaching pupils with SEN</b>	<b>Education</b>
Areeya	2	Bachelor: Special Education
Benjaporn	2	Bachelor: Special Education
Chareeka	4	Bachelor: English
Daleeka	8	Bachelor: Special Education Studying: Master of Special Education
Jutima	12	Bachelor: Special Education Master: Psychological Counsellor
Lalita	7	Bachelor: Special Education Studying: Master of Special Education
Malisa	5	Bachelor: Special Education Master: Psychological Counsellor
Neelanoot	5	Bachelor: Special Education Studying: Master of Special Education
Puntipa	2	Bachelor: Special Education
Rattana	3	Bachelor: Special Education
Sivaluck	2	Bachelor: Physical education

### **Pupils Participating in the Intensive Interaction Teaching Programme**

This study adopted the suggestion of Nind and Hewett (2001) for nominating pupils who had more social ability and were easier to interact with, rather than ones who were extremely socially withdrawn, as the teachers were beginners in the use of Intensive Interaction. One reason for this was that I was afraid that if the teacher had a difficult case, they might have given up and not taken the teaching project further. Eighteen pupils, including one with SLD, were identified as having autistic spectrum disorders showing some degrees of social withdrawal and communicative impairment. Afterwards the teachers, however, included three more pupils who were at an extreme level

of social remoteness, with two who were fully mobile. The age range was 4-13 with the exception of one 18-year old. All had function at a developmental level of two years or less. Only two pupils displayed a little spoken language ('no' and 'don't'). Most engaged in repetitive behaviour (e.g. rocking, screaming, playing with hands) or some amount of self-harm (e.g. banging their head on the floor, pulling their hair, hitting their chin) or some amount of harm to other people (e.g. biting, pinching). Almost all these pupils knew their teachers but had minimal individual interaction. This study found that starting with the pupils who were more social was good practice in that the teachers could observe quick progress of social abilities from the pupils they initially selected. This resulted in the motivation and effort to continually use Intensive Interaction with pupils who were extremely socially withdrawn, although it was harder to use Intensive Interaction with such pupils and their progress was less observed and very slow.

### **The Time of the Intensive Interaction Implementation**

Regular scheduled activities of the school day were not impacted by using the Intensive Interaction teaching programme. The initial use of Intensive Interaction was agreed as an additional teaching programme after scheduled activities had finished or when additional time was found in the normal routine activities.

### **Consideration of Ethical Issues**

The data collection was conducted after approval from ethics in the Northumbria University committee as provided in appendix I, and my clearance from the Royal Thai Police. Prior to the ethics being approved, the president of Nakhon Ratchasima Rajabhat University (NRRU) granted me official permission to collect the data in the university, as provided in Appendix I and II. Her permission included using the conference room and facilities at the special education centre for the training course and running

workshops. Consent was collected from both the teacher participants and the parents of pupils who were the participants' interactive partners before any data collection. This research was designed and conducted according to my best ethical considerations. Most importantly, all parties involved in this research considered critically the potential benefits from the study. The benefits of this research for teachers relate to commencing work in a new pedagogical way. It was hoped that working in such a way would develop their teaching skills to work with students with autism and SLD leading to improvement in their professional satisfaction and career. For children, in Thailand, existing intervention programmes currently have very limited effectiveness for this group of students. This project could, therefore, be favourable to parents and their children as it offered an alternative approach that has proved beneficial to children with autism and SLD in other countries with different cultural backgrounds (e.g. Kellett 2000; Knott, 1998; Nind, 1996; Taylor and Taylor, 1998; Watson and Fisher 1997).

### **Gaining consent from teachers**

At the end of the training day, in order to recruit participants, I gave the information sheets and consent forms, **as shown in appendix VI and VII**, to interested teachers, explained the aims of the research, and answered anything that was unclear or of concern. They were given two weeks to decide if they wanted to be a volunteer. The volunteers had their rights clearly explained again when we signed their consent forms. As I was aware that the pedagogical innovation of Intensive Interaction is very different from the former pedagogy teachers had ingrained in their mind, in order to make the teachers feel comfortable and ensure they were not coerced, the agreements between the teachers and the researcher were continually reviewed throughout the research project. The teachers had to feel, first, that they would be well supported in the application of this new pedagogy at a level at which they felt comfortable, within the principles of Intensive Interaction and, second, they had to feel that they could stop at any stage without having to give a reason.

At the beginning of individual interviews, participants were reminded that they could quit the interview at any time and had the right to refuse to answer any question they felt uncomfortable with. Additionally, I continually encouraged them to feel free to speak openly. I explained to them that it was as important for me as a researcher to know what they found difficult, did not understand and did not like, as it was to know what was good about this approach. This is the only way we could look at the effective implementation of teaching practices for pupils with autism and SLD.

The identities of all participants were fully protected. Teachers were informed that the interviews would be recorded with their permission and kept strictly confidential on my laptop, which is password protected, my computer and on 'Desktop Anywhere' at Northumbria University, which can be accessed only by me. The information recorded in individual interviews was transcribed by me, and those in group interviews were transcribed by my research assistant. The information was given a coded name to ensure confidentiality in that it would not be readily traceable to its source. The coded name of teachers and their pupils were matched and treated in strict confidence. The research reports were in a summarised pattern where no identity of participants was revealed. In the research report, the participants' names and settings were protected by the use of pseudonyms.

In the focus group interview, however, the teachers were informed that the researcher could not guarantee confidentiality for information which might be disclosed in the group interviews; participants were made aware of this fact prior to participation. This was because each group was a team of teachers working together at the same place through a period of five and a half months. These group interviews were intended to make them sufficiently comfortable to express their point of view. However, they also were informed that if any individual was not happy to talk in the group, my research assistant would arrange an individual interview for her/him and all records would be kept privately. Refreshments and cakes were provided in each focus group to encourage a comfortable atmosphere. Two teachers in different settings could not come to participate in the focus groups. I

contacted them and asked if they were willing to come to an individual interview with my research assistant. They agreed and the individual interviews were arranged in places that they proposed without asking for the reason for their absence in the group interview. Both teachers were happy in the individual interview.

**Professional Confidence:** I was attempting to engage participating teachers with some ideas that may be helpful in their teaching methods for teaching pupils with autism and SLD. During this process, it was possible that the teachers would feel that this practice undermined their professional knowledge, or that, after adopting Intensive Interaction, they would feel upset that they had made mistakes in their teaching practice, even though they had done the best they could. If this happened, I decided I would explain to **them** that the ideas underpinning their former pedagogy **was** not **their** mistake; **they** did not do anything wrong with **their** pupils as the practice used to help pupils with autism and SLD **was** the best known at that time. If **they** had, however, now found a new, more helpful, idea, then **they** should try to adopt it to improve the quality of **their** teaching. By doing this **they** would be taking appropriate action for **their** pupils and **their** profession. If **they** had tried another, better method in **their** teaching, whether **they** liked Intensive Interaction practice or not, **they** would be contributing positively both to **their** work and all involved with **their** pupils.

### **Gaining consent from Parents for Children with Autism and SLD to participate in the Intensive Interaction Teaching Programme**

Before collecting any information, the teachers and I met all the parents of the pupils involved and explained to them that the teachers of their children were going to be participating in a research project. As a part of the research project, I asked the teachers how much their child was enjoying the Intensive Interaction teaching sessions. This research was about teachers and I would not ask their children any questions and did not call for them to do anything different from their everyday lives at school. The parents were safeguarded from any pressure or coercion. I offered them **information sheets and**

consent forms (see appendix VIII and IX) to take with them and encouraged them to consult other family members and then call me if they would like more information to allow their child to take part in the teaching programme. They were given ten days to decide whether they were happy for their children to take part in the teaching programme. In Thailand, ethics do not need formal approval and thus the consent form was a new matter for these parents. Some of them could not read and were afraid of signing their names on the forms in case they were required to pay money in the future. Some caregivers verbally allowed the teachers to teach Intensive Interaction with their children before they signed the consent forms. Throughout the research process, I continually visited parents after school time in order to retain good relationships, to ensure they were still happy for their children to be involved in the teaching programme and to answer anything they raised.

### **Involving the Director and Principal Teacher**

The necessity of successful joint work in Thai culture, where it is hierarchically socially structured, is reverence for those in higher positions than the participants. At the very beginning of school visits, I had visited the directors of my teacher participants to introduce myself, to explain the research aims and to describe what their teachers were doing in the research. I had communication with the director and principal teacher about the research progress to show respect and acknowledge that I was the guest in their place. The degree of visits varied according to the time of the director and principal teacher. Sometimes I met with the senior teachers who supervised the participant teachers instead. Overall, they kindly supported teachers and this helped smooth my research project.

### **The Role of the Researcher and the Application of being an Insider**

In this research context, I considered myself a part of the participant teachers' world. My role was placed in various positions: a lecturer in a

university, trainer, supporter, co-researcher and PhD student conducting the research with teachers from within my university and from schools where I am known by some of my participants. Here, I am already, to some extent, an insider. As a member of the research community, where we shared the same culture and a range of teaching experiences, this gave me an advantage to access the three sets of field work as I possessed some acceptance in the field by both gatekeepers and participants. The advantage in accessing the field and building relationships more quickly and intimately has been reported for many insider researchers, for example Sherif (2001) and Hodgkinson (2005). For me, I had almost immediate access before the beginning of the research. I am familiar with the director at the university and know some of the directors and principal teachers in schools. My background also helps me to know my participants' past history, which has advantages in predicting and understanding individual and group responses to innovative implementation (Fullan, 2007 p. 94). This role influenced data collection, analysis and interpretation of data, and the maintenance of the study's rigour.

My teacher participants, to some extent, considered me as their lecturer, although previously I had never taught them before. In Thai culture, teachers are respected and will not be openly challenged as discussed in chapter three. Being respected as a lecturer and supporter as well as, at the same time, being an interviewer was acknowledged as a methodological challenge. The unequal power between myself and the participant teachers is a Thai hierarchical boundary, and might pose a threat to participants. The issue of control and compliance on the participant behaviour and the research process was critically considered. On this point, my supervisors and I discussed potential guidance for me to work in an appropriate way with participants as described in the previous section of consideration of ethical issues. In addition, initially, I committed to the suggestion that I work as a team researcher (Bartunek and Loius, 1996) to encourage teachers to share their status.

Insider researchers can be open to criticism for being too close, too involved, too familiar; over-rapport and lacking detachment mean that it may lead to the loss of critical abilities and objectivities (Brewer, 2000; Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007). However, 'detachment and objectivity are barriers to quality, not insurance of having achieved it' (Denzin and Lincoln, 2002, p. 334). I agree that rather than divest our own values, we should be aware of the role we play (Lincoln and Guba, 1985, p. 308). Inside research, on the other hand, has its methodological advantages in the research process: the advantage of shared experiences; the advantage of greater access; the advantage of cultural interpretation; and the advantage of deeper understanding and richness of data (Ashworth, 1995; Wellington, 1996; Labaree, 2002). In this study, being, to a certain extent, an insider researcher enabled shared experiences to occur continually, and this was the important part for developing practice of teachers. Being an insider allowed me to spend adequate time in fieldwork which can inform a deeper understanding and knowledge of the perceptions of my participants.

As an insider, my professional background, personal belief and Thai culture would shape the research. I was going to be involved in the data generation and my fieldwork experiences would impact on the data interpretation, which I was greatly aware of. This required me to combine the view of insider with that of outsider, who was able to maintain more critical and analytical abilities and needed me to maintain the proper balance of those two points of view (Brewer, 2000; Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007). Here, I was neither in a purely professional status, where I maintained emotional distance, domination and no rapport, nor in a position of 'over-rapport'. I needed to engage actively with my teacher participants, but retain outsider's view to access adequate data collection (Brewer, 2000).

In the very early fieldwork, I felt I was an outsider due to the difficulty of accessing my participants' groups. Here (in the northern part of Thailand), regional dialects were used within the group, but formal language was used with me. I had just moved into this area and had worked there for a couple of



years. I come from the capital territory, am 12-16 years older than my participants, and also have a higher social status. The teachers at this stage treated me as a lecturer and researcher from the UK, a land they thought only the one who has *Vadsana* (goodness accumulated from the previous life) could visit. Further, the tradition in the north in relation to social hierarchy and authority status is much stronger than that in my former workplace (the southern part of Thailand). For example, if I sat in a chair they would walk on their knees when approaching me, or if I stood up, they would bend their back when walking past me. Besides Wai, they used the oral respect forms of Ka or Krub. I am called A-Jan (lecturer in a university), and they call themselves Knoo (the word that a daughter calls herself when talking to her parent, or the younger sister calls herself when talking to her older sister/brother). My professional status and my age were a distance between us. As my fieldwork progressed, I applied Intensive Interaction with some pupils together with my participants. We taught pupils together, exchanged our teaching practices and shared a laugh with them. They spoke much more to me and allowed me to participate in some activities with them, such as sharing food, talking, going to a beauty salon, and going out to eat. In this time, I felt and acted more like an insider. I called myself 'Pee' which means 'older sister'. Thai people call familiar people who are older than them with respect 'Pee' (older sister or brother) and younger than them 'Nong' (younger sister or brother). I also called them by their nicknames, as in Thai culture a nickname is the usual way to address people.

However, I felt like more an outsider again when I arranged the workshops where they acted like my students - they went back to their group and spoke to me in a cautious manner again. In addition, my outsider status often was shown to my participants while I was with their directors. Shifting the balance between insider and outsider occurred frequently throughout my fieldwork research period. Further, while writing my research diary in the evening, I felt the same as Hastrup (1987, cited in O'Reilly, 2009), who noted that "in the mirror of fieldwork you see yourself at the same time as you see others" (p.117). This needed me to be 'a third-person character' in order to reflect myself from the thing I observed and interacted with in the fieldwork.

Importantly, in that time, the professional distance and outsider's view were most emphasised. Although I moved in and out between insider and outsider position, my role as a student and an academic researcher, as well as a lecturer, enabled me to grasp a wider perspective and the deeper stories of teachers in relation to their own experiences and perceptions of Intensive Interaction.

The most challenging part in my fieldwork was being expected to fill a role which mismatched the agreement between my participants and me during the process of developing teachers' practice. I was expected to be in a strict evaluator role with my participants. The situation was a problem in relation to gatekeepers, as described by Taylor and Bogdan (1998, p.47). I fully recognized that it was impossible to conduct my research project without the directors' helpful support. They took the role of being my gatekeeper, and of being kind and supportive. They wanted me to be a volunteer who was used to working with Thai teachers and pupils with SEN in the special centres. In a volunteer role, they worked as the setter of the teaching programme structure where they would direct the teachers to what they had to do. They would evaluate by monitoring the teachers and keeping records about their teaching practice every morning, with meetings arranged for discussion every week. I was aware my participants felt uncomfortable and were unhappy, and even that some might resist me, if this situation happened. I knew this would happen from my previous work experience with the director, the volunteers and the teachers. As such, teachers would do this new practice more regularly as a regulation and it might be a better data source for my research, but it would not make the participants happy. For me, conducting research means behaving to my participants as people, not only as a data source (Taylor and Bogdan, 1998). My participants' well-being and our good relationship were frequently considered as important.

In the process of developing teachers' practice, I had to negotiate continually between teachers and their directors. It was difficult to say that this was not the way I wanted to do the research. In Thai traditional culture, social hierarchy is still strong where we are always obedient to whoever has

seniority and is higher in status than us. However, this does not mean that we are forced by authority, but rather by the duty of being in a 'family'. In Thai traditional culture, the expected duty of the older ones who are in a higher status or higher authority is to support and take care of the younger ones as the younger sister in their family, and the younger ones give them obedience and respect in exchange. After again being informed of the aims of my research, the directors allowed the teachers to try their own way within the principles of Intensive Interaction, as long as they remained comfortable, , and allowed them to stop the teaching session if they wished.

## **Developing Educators' Practice during the Period of Data Collection**

After the two-day training course was carried out, the teachers participating in the study received input about Intensive Interaction and how to apply it to some extent. They agreed to try Intensive Interaction as a new way of teaching social and communication abilities to their pupils and would let me know how it went. During the period of data collection, the study was designed to continually develop the teachers' practice of the Intensive Interaction approach and to build relationships with them. The training course was followed up in five and a half months –one semester and a summer time. There were two types of activity to achieve these purposes: 1) school teaching visits and 2) a half-day workshop. A key principle of developing educators' practice in this study is based on the idea of 'reflecting and learning together', as the way for knowledge building and development (Cook, 2004).

### **School Teaching Visits**

Teaching visits were aimed at sharing practice and offering solutions to any barriers faced by the participants. The first teaching visit started after each of participant was interviewed about their general perception of the teaching

method, and I had already met their directors to introduce myself to them and told them what the study was about, how the participant would be involved and what the research findings would bring about. In this stage, teachers were experimenting with what they learned of the Intensive Interaction approach. They were learning by doing it in their own classroom in order to construct their own knowledge of Intensive Interaction. This learning philosophy of education was supported by the philosophy of Vygotsky and Dewey who stated 'we learn by doing' after we have reflected on what we have done. This model emphasizes learning as a social construct through social interaction and argues for the importance of culture and context in developing understanding (McMahon, 1997). My role in this part was to support their teaching practice and to encourage them to reflect on what they did and to advise them when they needed it.

### **A Half-day Workshop**

The first purpose of the workshop focused on adding the body of new knowledge supporting Intensive Interaction. In the study, three workshops were held in the university. Their duration was approximately 2-3 hours from 1.30 to 4.30 pm. This time was agreed by both the teachers and their directors as the teachers would have almost completed the pupils' learning schedule. Some topics of the workshop were chosen by the teacher participants, for example, they wanted to know more about the use of Thai games and songs in Intensive Interaction sessions. The teaching strategies used in the workshop were the same method as in the two-day training intervention as they felt comfortable and relaxed with this learning style. Another aim of the half-day workshop was to exchange experiences amongst the research team. This arena of sharing their teaching practice relied on the social constructivist position. This is because social constructivism emphasised learning through social interaction and group experiences.

In order to prepare the half-day workshops, a convenient time for all teachers from the three schools was arranged before sending an invitation letter from my university to their schools. Culturally, this informal agreement should be made before the formal invitation by official letter was sent as those who would be invited did not want to refuse. I prepared the material, such as a PowerPoint presentation, internet presentation and book notes to distribute to all teachers. Refreshments (cakes, snacks and drinks) were provided. All teachers received money to cover travel expenses after each workshop finished. The activities and data collected in this research are presented in table 5.2.

Activities	Number
Recruitment: two-day training course	25
Group workshop 1 <sup>st</sup>	10
Group workshop 2 <sup>nd</sup>	8
Group workshop 3 <sup>rd</sup>	9

Research Sites	Number of Transcriptions
Group workshops	3
Individual Interview - Special Education Centre at URRN	27
Individual Interview - Special Education Centre Region xxx	12
Individual Interview - Regular School	6
Focus group interviews	2
Individual interviews conducted by a research assistance	3
Field notes and research diary entries	61
Total	114

**Table 5.2 Activities and data collected in this research**

## Research Methods for Data Collection

The primary source of data generation was repeated semi-structured interviews. Focus group interviews and participant observation were adopted as sub-primary data sources in order to generate the meaning of participants' perceptions in a more holistic view of the phenomenon. These methods were chosen because they are congruent with the interpretivist/social constructivist research paradigm and methodology, and allowed access to participants' perceptions.

### Interviews

An interview is a form of communication, "a means of extracting different forms of information from individuals and groups" (Byrne, 2004:180). In hermeneutic phenomenology, interviewing is useful within very specific purposes. Firstly, it is employed as a means for exploring and gathering a person's narrative of experience that is accessible to a richer and deeper understanding of human phenomenon. Secondly, the interview is a way to encourage the development of a conversational relationship with participants about the meaning of an experience (Van Manen, 1997).

There are various interview options available to the interviewer: telephone, email, and face-to-face (Gillham, 2005). The primary advantage of telephone interviewing for this study is that it could save time because of the geographical spread of the participants, while retaining efficiency for prompting and probing in order to elicit deeper information. However, it may miss "non-verbal elements which are a major part of live communication" (Gillham, 2005:103) and also lose much of the empathy that the researcher would like to build with the participants. In addition, telephone interviews might be a form of intrusion on personal privacy (Gillham, 2005), so this method was not considered as a primary source of data generation. An email interview is a type of distance interview that is considerably less intrusive

than telephone interviews as it allows participants to respond in their own time and at their own rate of response (Lowades, 2005). This type of interview is hard to access for Thai people in rural areas where computers and the internet are not used widely in accommodation because of their prohibitive prices. Further, a part of the sensitive issue of the research topic is likely not to emerge from a written form of information in e-mail interviews. This method was therefore not regarded to be the most effective way to gain participants' greater depth and complexity of information. Face-to-face interviews were chosen as a main source of data generation because a greater amount of information required from these interviews would be best generated by social interaction with the participants. Importantly, a rapport between participants and the researcher was likely to be easier to establish and develop in face-to-face interaction. A further advantage of face-to-face interview is that it can motivate the respondent to participate in answering (Barriball and While, 1994). This was important for Thai people as the alternatives may have reduced their response rates as they may not have the confidence or willingness to write down their responses.

### Semi-structured interviews

Several forms of face-to-face interviews are possible in conducting research. They range from the questionnaire-based interview (structured interview), which is a more rigid format where they allow very little opportunity for the participant to express their own perceptions in the manner of their choosing, to totally open-ended interviews (unstructured interviews) that might begin with a single question (Byrne, 2004; Minichiello et al., 2000). A semi-structured interview was chosen in this research to provide the advantages of both structured and unstructured interviews (see the examples of semi-structured individual interviews in appendix X, XI). Unlike structured interviews, semi-structured interviews are interpretive and allow the expansion and complexity of answers to emerge. Drever (1997) identified the meaning of semi-structured interview as 'The interviewer sets up a general structure by deciding in advance what ground is to be covered and what

main questions are to be asked' (p. 1). S/he and then allows participants the freedom to respond to questions and probes, and to describe their experiences without being fixed on specific answers. This type of interview is very suitable when the objective of the research is to explore of 'the perceptions and opinions of respondents regarding complex and sometimes sensitive issues and enable probing for more information and clarification of answers' (Barriball and Whiles, 1994, p. 330). A further advantage over unstructured interviews is the ability to compare across interviews as some of the questions are guided (Minichiello, Madison, Hays, Courtney, and St. John, 1999).

The informal nature of the semi-structured interview has been referred to as 'conversations with a purpose' (Byrne, 2004 p.181) which may create a friendlier environment where the interviewer is in a very flexible form of information gathering in which a conversation-type style is adopted. Barriball and Whiles (1994), in citing a number of authors concerned with qualitative research, note a number of advantages in using this type of personal interview technique as a kind of data generation:

1. it has the potential to overcome the poor response rates of a questionnaire survey
2. it is well suited to the exploration of attitudes, values, beliefs and motives
3. it provides the opportunity to evaluate the validity of the respondent's answers by observing non-verbal indicators, which is particularly useful when discussing sensitive issues
4. it can facilitate comparability by ensuring that all questions are answered by each respondent
5. it ensures that the respondent is unable to receive assistance from others while formulating a response.

There are, nevertheless, some considerations when using the semi-structured interview method. Many concerns rest on the interviewer's skills required to elicit the quality of information from a participant, for example



(Barriball and While, 1994; Drever, 1997; Patton, 2002). It is also important at an early stage to understand how the data will be used since it may provide a rich and varied amount of information that is not easily interpreted or analysed (Cohen et al., 2000). The very nature of the interview also includes a degree of subjectivity that must be factored into any analysis. Despite these considerations, this method was still considered the most appropriate for the objectives of this research.

These limitations were reduced when I stayed longer in the field work, developed a good relationship with the participants and conducted repeated semi-structured interviews. These issues were detailed in the role of the researcher and rigour and trustworthiness sections.<sup>27</sup>

## **Participant Observation**

In this research, participant observation was used for a variety of purposes. First, it was a part of the developmental process involving the follow-up of the training course which was aimed at helping participants to improve their teaching skills (Angrosino, 2007). Second, it was used as a data source to gain an insight into the culture of the research setting (Patton, 2002). Thirdly, it was a means of building-up the rapport between participants and the researcher and thus it is a 'strategy that facilitates data collection in the field' (Bernard, 1988 p. 150, cited in Angrosino, 2007). The term participant observation can be defined as a 'process of learning through exposure to or involvement in the day-to-day or routine activities of participants in the research setting' (Schensul et. al., 1999 p. 91, cited in Angrosino, 2007). It is a method of generating data with the researcher submerging himself or herself in a research setting (Mason, 1996). Participant observations were implemented during the school visits, informal interactions with teachers,

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<sup>27</sup> Achieving rigour and trustworthiness in research are discussed in p. 141-142.

staff, children, and their parents and workshops on the follow-up training at the university.

As mentioned by Patton (2002), participant observations in natural settings have several advantages. The participant observations enabled me to understand the participants and the context of the research better, to be open, discovery-oriented and inductive. It also allowed me to discover any important point that might have been missed between the participants in the setting, and to uncover issues that the participants might not freely talk about in interview situations, especially information on sensitive topics. Participant observation enabled me to interpret data so as to understand a holistic perspective of the cultural context.

The research role of involvement varies from study to study. Gold (1958, as cited in Angrosino, 2007) classifies four types of participation: complete observer, observer-as-participant, participant-as-observer, and complete participant. In this study, I defined my role as a participant-as-observer or in an active membership role as defined by Adler and Adler (1994, cited in Angrosino, 2007). I interacted and engaged more closely with my participants. Particularly, in the special education centre at the university, I developed close relationships with all participants as the research progressed, sharing meals, conversing after school time, going to the beauty salon and restaurant and so on. I was an advisor, friend and researcher. The degree of my involvement in the other two research settings, however, was less close than in university, as the opportunity to observe the participants at the university was much more readily available. During participant observations, all participants and staff at the settings were aware of my presence and the purpose of my study.

When observing Intensive Interaction teaching sessions at school I used an observation schedule as a tool for developing their pedagogic approach, and sharing supervisions and experiences, as provided in appendix XIII. After the session, although I had an agenda of issues for observation, I remained open to the variety of evidence presented to me and recorded in my research

diary after the event. This kind of observation can be classed as a semi-structured observation, as discussed by Cohen et al (2007), in that it can 'gather data to illuminate these issues in a far less predetermined manner than structured observation and allow the situation in each setting to be compared' (p.97). In this study, I retained the chance for the other elements of the situation to speak freely as I believe that the actions and interactions of participants and their situation evolve over time.

### Research diary

From the outset of this study I have kept a diary as a reflective journal in which I recorded my unstructured observations, thoughts, fears and problems, as well as critical incidents, events and breakthroughs that I considered important for the development of each aspect of the research. Thus, I used my writing to develop a richer understanding of the phenomena under investigation. Within the diary, I could document my theorising about ideas, concepts and their relationships as they struck me whilst in the field of action and during data analysis (Burgess 1982; Lincoln and Guba 1985). This procedure was used to keep track of emerging ideas and categories, to stimulate further analysis and data collection, and served as a means for the development of assertions and theoretical integration.

I kept writing my self-reflection in a research diary to establish whether my own behaviour was having an effect on the behaviours of the participants and, if so, what that was and what actions I might take in order to help minimise threats. Research diaries and field notes also recorded my research experiences, problems and ideas that arose during each stage of my fieldwork. They enabled me to construct the environment setting in which the participants spend time, which helped in describing and interpreting the circumstances surrounding the lived experienced of those being studied. In addition, throughout my fieldwork, I often spoke to my colleague in order to consult her about my concerns and prevent myself from becoming immersed in the participants' situation as an insider researcher and strengthen what I

interpret. Meanwhile, I discussed my concerns in the data collection process with my supervisors via email to obtain professional advice and guidance.

### Focus group Interview

Focus group interviews were used as another data source combined with one-to-one interviews and participant observation. They were carried out at the end of the research project to find out the overall experiences of participants throughout the project. Focus group interviews are a research technique that 'collects information through group interaction on a topic determined by the researcher' (Morgan, 1997, p. 6). It thus also provides a larger amount of information about the experiences, attitudes, views and emotional processes of participants within a group context (Morgan and Kreuger 1993). The advantage of using the focus group interview method in this research was that it would provide the opportunity for new information different from the previous two sources to emerge. In these combined uses of multiple qualitative methods, the goal was to use each method so that it contributed something unique to my understanding of the phenomenon under study.

The focus group interviews, as shown in appendix XII, were led by a research assistant who was recognised as a friend of my participants. She knew about Intensive Interaction as she had attended the two-day training course and participated in the workshop, as well as having applied the Intensive Interaction approach with some of her pupils. She graduated from a university with all female teachers and obtained her master's degree in the psychology of advice. She is a colleague of my participants and is similar in age, status, and interests with my study participants. She also talked with my participants in their regional dialects and transcribed the collected information in the focus group herself.

## Data Analysis

The data analysis methods were developed from the hermeneutic and phenomenological philosophy and from useful guidelines in the literature about the interpretation of qualitative research data. As there are different research questions and facets of the collected data, the use of a combination of different analytical techniques from experts in the interpretive community may elaborate on more complex details of social reality (Coffey and Atkinson 1996).

The goal of phenomenological data analysis is to 'try to grasp the essential meaning of something' (Van Manen, 1990, p.77) and to produce 'a thick description that accurately captures and communicates the meaning of the lived experience for the informants being studied' (Cohen, Kahn and Steeves, 2000, p.72). A thick description is one that captures the experience from the perspective of the informant in its fullest and richest complexity (Denzin, 2001). The overall aim is to develop abstractions which describe and interpret the way participants made sense of the phenomenon. These abstractions are grounded in the data (Titchen and McIntyre, 1993). In working within interpretative phenomenological inquiry, I used the self as the primary analytic tool; reading and reflecting on the description of the lived experience of people is the primary analytic activity (Van Manen, 1990). Further, this type of analysis allows the exploration of the meaning that is absent to the participants but can be gleaned from the stories provided by them. By interpreting the meanings in contextual features of participants' texts that might have direct relation to practice, culturally sensitive education knowledge can be created (Lopez and Willis, 2004).

This research adopted methods of thematic data analysis from the work of Titchen and colleagues (Edwards and Titchen, 2003; Titchen and McIntyre, 1993). This systematic method offers the interpretations and constructs of participants (first order constructs) and then layers with my own understandings, interpretations, and constructs (second order constructs).

This analysis method may mitigate the risk of imposing my interpretation on the data, as warned by Crotty (1996).

Adapted from Titchen and colleagues (1993; 2003), there are four stages in the analysis process as follows:

*Stage one: First order analysis*

- Organizing all data into texts and checking for accuracy
- Repeated reading of transcriptions and listening to the recorded interviews
- Identifying first order (participant) constructs
- Checking first order constructs with participants

*Stage two: Second order constructs*

- Identifying second order (researcher) constructs
- Grouping second order constructs into sub-themes

*Stage three: Generation of the themes*

- Re-reading of the data and formalized accounts
- Grouping sub-themes into themes

*Stage four: Elaboration of themes, theme development and testing out the themes*

- Further elaboration of themes
- Comparing themes across groups
- Linking the literature to the themes identified above
- Trying out the themes with literature
- Trying out the themes against the data

*Summary stage one:* The process of the first order analysis is a capturing of the accurate details of the participants' own concepts by using their own words or phrases. At first, the repeated semi-structured interviews, which were the main information source of this study, were transcribed verbatim

and double checked for accuracy. The transcripts, in landscape, were divided into five columns and printed. I read carefully, and then underlined sentences of first order (participant) constructs to capture the accurate details of the participants' own concepts by using their own words or phrases. In this stage, I was immersing myself in the data by attentively listening to how people talked about the phenomenon, going backwards and forwards between the recorded interviews and interview transcripts. While continuing the analysis with other cases, I kept asking 'what kinds of distinctions does the participant make?' and 'what are the differences/similarities with other cases?' First order constructs were analysed in the whole data set of each individual. At the end of this process, my understanding of the first order construct was checked by sending a summary back to each participant.

*Summary stage two:* I went back to all the scripts in order to generate second order constructs and ideas for links to wider themes by extracting the first order constructs and using my field notes, diaries, theoretical and personal knowledge. In this stage, I interpreted each script to form the whole picture of that person and understood each informant's view of the situation. In this stage, I was moving from the language of everyday life, to the formalised language of my field area. I then created a computer file for each new construct and copied relevant extracts of the transcript, including surrounding context, into the computer file. When a construct fits closely with one already identified, the extract of text and associated context was copied into an existing file.

*Summary stage three:* Stage three involved re-reading all the data and abstractions of all cases from second order constructs to gradually generate themes and sub-themes — the grouping of the second order constructs into the themes. Themes were defined by commonality of similar second order constructs across the participants. These abstractions were then named themes. I then again revisited cases to ensure that important aspects would not be missed.

*Summary stage four:* In the final analytical stage, the ideas of the themes and sub-themes were further elaborated by writing memos and drafts of the themes. In this stage, the themes were developed from reading the literature and seeking their relationship with the data by re-reading everything collected. This stage required me to continuously move backwards and forwards between the literature and the prior analysis. In this evolving process, I needed to move from parts to the whole, and in turn, as it was informed by the hermeneutic circle.

## **Achieving Rigour and Trustworthiness in Research**

As a hermeneutical researcher, I am aware that the data generated by my participants is fused with my personal knowledge and my interest, and thus data are placed in the context of 'co-construction'. In the fieldwork, I did my best to work with my personal knowledge and interests by continually examining and modifying them to understand myself and my participants. I accepted, described and interpreted the data from my participants' perspectives as accurately as possible and strove to represent their multiple voices with respect. The criteria of triangulation, prolonged engagement, reflexivity, member checks and peer reviews were established through the strategies detailed below to ensure rigour and trustworthiness in this inquiry.

### ***Triangulation***

Triangulation, using different sources of data collection, is offered as one important strategy in establishing the trustworthiness of qualitative data (Denzin, 1989; Krefting, 1991; Lather, 1986; Patton, 1999; Yin, 2009). Types of triangulation include: *data triangulation*, *investigator triangulation*, *theoretical triangulation*, *methodological triangulation* (Denzin, 1989; Patton, 2002). In this research, *data triangulation* and *investigator triangulation* were adopted to establish the worthiness and rigour of my data analysis (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005). The combination of different data sources produced a more comprehensive picture of participants' narratives to 'explain more fully, the richness and complexity of human behaviour by studying it from more



than one standpoint' (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2007, p. 141). These different data sources employed as triangulated data were cross-checked to see if there were any inconsistencies (Yin, 2009). In this study, repeated individual interviews and active participant observation were conducted in a group of participants both in different settings and at different times (*data triangulation*). The combination of these two different sources of data increased the chances of improving the depth, breadth and accuracy of the phenomena I explored. Whilst active participant observation, as discussed in chapter five, was aimed at developing teachers' practice, building-up the rapport to facilitate data collection in the field and gaining an insight into the culture of the research setting, it was used as a data source that checked against and filled out accounts given in repeated individual interviews, and vice versa. Focused-group interviews led by a research assistant who was familiar with the participants were cross-checked to avoid any inconsistency with the face-to-face individual interviews conducted by me (*investigator triangulation*). Any inconsistency in my data sources was treated as an opportunity to discover deeper meaning in my data (Patton, 1999). This type of triangulation, in this study, added breadth and depth to the analysis to form themes, interpret the research findings and make the interpretation of my study more credible.

### *Prolong Engagement, Reflexivity, Member Checks and Peer Reviews*

Research diaries and field notes were kept whilst I was involved in a prolonged engagement in everyday life in field work. As previously explained my research diary and field notes (p.140-141) served as a reflexive journey (see p.148-157), which was not only to facilitate the outsider's view but also to crosscheck at the stage of analysing the data. The field notes from observation and informal conversations were checked with my participants at interviews. Member checks were conducted to ensure the credibility of my research (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). I transcribed the recorded interviews after finishing each interview session and checked the content accuracy with my participants at the next interview. During this interviewing, paraphrasing and probing were used to seek clarification and to ensure that participants'

meanings were correctly understood. After all the data were collected, I gave a summary of their interviews and their own interpretations (the first order or participants' constructs) in the Thai language back to each participant. As my participants were in Thailand, I conducted the member checks with them via email, Facebook and via my research assistant in Thailand. Almost all the participants confirmed the accuracy of their interviews and interpretation; some were uncomfortable when they saw the content of their interview in written form. This starkly revealed their negative attitudes to play. As their perceptions of play had now changed through engagement with Intensive Interaction, even though they still had reservations about play, they were unhappy to see this illuminated by their interviews. However, I used the original transcripts to form themes. During the field work, peer review was implemented using my senior colleague as a consultant in order to exchange alternative perspectives and gain new ideas about how I was collecting data. For example, in the first session of a teaching visit in a class, a teacher was absent from her class without contacting me in advance, and this made me very worried that I might have something wrong. This problem was explained by my senior colleague when we had lunch together (which we did almost every day), that my participant was worried about my expectations and was afraid of being monitored. Acting on my colleague's advice I went to a class, without making any appointment with my participants, to play and feed children in order to build a familiarity with my participants. My senior colleague was a former teacher of all my participants, but one. Her seniority, experiences and familiarity with my participants helped me to know faster about the characteristics, habits, histories and problems of my participants and she was able to give me suggestions to solve various problems. In addition, she gave me ideas about the meaning of the collected data, as well as emotional support.

## Critical Reflections on Doing My Research in the Thai Context

### Managing the Implementation Process

This study starts from the varying levels of interest and enthusiasm of special education teachers. Fullan (2007) indicated that the need for intervention was another important factor in the teachers' context, which affects implementation. In this study, some teachers, that showed high interest in participating in the study as they had previously recognised the importance of the intervention's aim, accepted the principle of intervention because it joined together with their personality. Some teachers showed interest in employing Intensive Interaction with their pupils but expressed uncomfortable feelings that reflected on the process of being monitored and evaluated strictly from the top because they had historically negative experiences with the process of being forced change to another teaching approach. The previous negative experiences were stated and that may be a factor that can hamper the implementation regardless of the merit of the new intervention (Fullan, 2007). Some teachers were hesitant and indecisive in manner. There were several reasons for this, including the aim of the intervention, as discussed in chapter six, in that social and communication abilities were not previously recognised as priority needs for the teaching goals. Furthermore, workloads, low salary, job insecurity, poor workplace environment and employment factors were significant problems that caused teachers to lack the interest and enthusiasm to try something new. Although a variety of reasons reduced some teachers' motivation, when an elder (a school administrator and the researcher) asked the juniors (school teacher) to do something, the cultural norms often yield a positively acceptable response. This is the tendency to show consideration or 'kreng jai' for one's elder (a school administrator and the researcher), which is a central norm in Thai seniority culture (Holmes and Tangtongtavy, 1997; Mulder, 1996; Hallinger, 2003). As a consequence, the initial degree of interest and enthusiasm for participating in the present study varied from one teacher to the next.

As with other nations, the presence or absence of administrator support was an important situation affecting the success of the implementation (Caldwell, 1998; Fullan, 2007). In Thailand, directors hold a higher degree of power within the school, both culturally and institutionally, compared with western nations (Hallinger, Chantarapany, Sriboonma, and Kantamara, 2000). This study was unlikely to happen without the administrator's support. Moreover, this study needed teachers to participate in teacher education meetings during school time and the researcher also needed to enter the school to observe the teachers' Intensive Interaction sessions. Many of these requirements could not be made without support from the directors. In the present study, some directors also attended the training course and follow-up workshops and desired all special-education teachers in their school to participate in this research project in order to improve the school as a whole, but I believed this would not work. The first reason was that a tenet of Intensive Interaction is that mutual pleasure is hard to achieve effectively by a reluctant person. As Firth (2010, p.51) stated, 'it would not be wise to attempt to force people to take part in Intensive Interaction if they are not willing to do so since they are unlikely to implement the approach effectively'. Secondly, the one-way, extreme top-down direction for change could create hidden resistance from teachers that was obstructive to implementation. However, it should be noted that the implementation pattern in this study almost appropriately met both top-down and bottom-top implementation when without the teachers' workload and job satisfaction issues mentioned above.

Furthermore, I was expected by the directors to monitor and assess teachers intensively and strictly in order to manage change. If carried out in that way, it would make the teachers regularly implement Intensive Interaction and might yield richer perspectives to the study, but it would also engender silent conflict, which in turn might negatively affect the perspectives on Intensive Interaction. Unwillingness and silent resistance could lead to a very fragile situation and might finally result in the teachers quitting the job, a situation

which had been previously observed in the past. It seemed that they readily tended to leave the field. From my past historical experiences working with many special education teachers, it allowed me to predict the group of teachers' responses. I hence considered working in another way by just adopting the verbal support of the directors, and not their direction and authority. I also made it clear that my intention was to support the teachers to use the new intervention in their 'comfort zone'. That meant the implementation process would be negotiated and mutually adapted amongst us and would not involve the directors' authorities for forced change. Importantly, they would not be forced to exactly match their behaviour to all components of Intensive Interaction if there were some that they felt uncomfortable to employ. I believed that doing work in this way would allow me to understand the implementation of Intensive Interaction via their realistic views. Ethically, creating and fostering the teachers to work freely, have fun and simultaneously benefit from the research project was an important goal of this study.

It could be said that I worked with Thai teachers without *Paramee*. In working with Thais, *Paramee* is the vital component in order to be successful in a job. As mentioned in Chapter 3, *Paramee* is comprised of two aspects: 'Phrakhun' or 'Bunkhun' (grateful relationship) and 'Phradet' (power and authority) (Holmes and Tangtongtavy, 1997). In conducting this research, I did not have *Pradet* or power and authority to give any reward to teachers and neither did I use any authority from the directors who were my gate keepers. I only adopted the school directors' support and used some degree of the respect that teachers gave me as a lecturer and senior figure as a starting point, but this was not enough to get through the process of implementation successfully. An effective way to receive a Thai's cooperation was to build relationships and *Bunkhun*. Unlike the West, where they tend to create relationships from work-orientation, Thais often build relationships from other activities which have a fun / pleasure orientation, or *Sanuk* as described by Komin (1991). Activities such as having lunch, going out, and talking about their personal matters were constantly applied, rather

than just work activity direction. This did not, however, mean that we did not talk about work, but it meant that we often did not make it too explicitly deliberate, so that they felt we did not consider their feelings, which could stop the work. According to Sorod, (1991 as mentioned by Thanasankit and Corbitt, 2000) “relationship-oriented behaviour happens more common[ly] than work-oriented behaviour in Thai society and its organizations”. In the implementation process, I found that sometimes we were in a very strong social relationship-related culture which is far from work-achievement orientation on the other side. However, I maintained an implicit balance between both sides. Only through this way I could encourage and support them back to work.

In the present study, there was not a strong commitment to be made for successful work amongst the teachers and myself as I knew that it would be unlikely to happen. Making a strong commitment would create avoidance and discomfort in the teachers. Thai Teachers have a strong ‘ego’, which means they would do it when they want to do it (Komin, 1991). Commitment was an ongoing process implicitly built through relationships and Bunkhun throughout the project. In Thai culture, older figures will not come to younger ones with an empty hand. We always bring food, snacks or staff to give to the younger figures. This may be a way of creating Bunkhun or Phrakhun in order to make the younger feel a moral obligation and enthusiasm to do work (Komin, 1991; Holmes and Tangtongtavy, 1997). More importantly, informal conversation expressing my interest in their personal matters and giving advice were found to be an effective way for Bunkhun to be built up. Furthermore, creating a friendly and fun atmosphere was a crucial component to encourage their ongoing participation (Komin, 1991, Mulder, 1978). Phradet, or power and authority, relationships, bunkhun and a sense of humour were vital components for effectively working with this group of teachers.

## Teaching Session and Using Self-Modelling

In the school visits, the Intensive Interaction teaching sessions were observed as planned. I made appointments, watched the teaching sessions according to observation guidance, took notes and afterwards discussed their practices after the session ended. Observation guidance of Intensive Interaction elements (see appendix XIII) was provided and explained to the teachers before the observation schedule was set. This observation guidance allowed them to know what I was looking at in the teaching session, as well as making them feel relaxed and minimising the stress that may happen. This also would help prompt the teacher to use principles they may have overlooked and assured them that Intensive Interaction would occur with pupils as was intended. However, I did not mean that teachers had to make it happen as well as I expected they could. While being in the observation session, I did not intervene in the interactions between the teacher and her/his pupils if the pupils still showed the desire to have fun with their teachers. I sometimes only intervened when the teachers tried to lengthen the interactive sessions while the pupils showed signs of a desire to terminate them.

After ending the first observation session, some teachers expressed their feeling of relief after finishing the teaching session. They were worried about making mistakes while employing Intensive Interaction. This reflected the rigid concept of the right or wrong teaching pattern that they were familiar with in the cultural pedagogy and this idea seemed to reduce their flexible ideas for responding to the pupil. It also might reflect any remaining feelings of discomfort about being watched. One way of reducing the 'status gap' between teachers and the researcher and creating an informal and familiar relationship, was by calling myself 'Pee', which means 'older sister'. As I have explained, Thais call a familiar person who is older than them 'Pee' (older sister or brother) and younger than them 'Nong' (younger sister or brother). However, all participant teachers called me A-jan, as a lecturer in the university. I felt that I could not find any Thai word that could create an

equal relationship amongst us and also felt that the Thai hierarchical relationship language imposed quite a limit to the expression of ideas.

Subsequently, I felt that I played the role of a co-participant when I also was an interactive partner with some consenting pupils. It should be noted that I practiced Intensive Interaction with two children in the clinic room, not those registered in the special school, when I arrived in Thailand to prepare training materials at the university. At first, the role of a co-participant occurred when I, almost every day, came to the teachers' classroom at 2.30 pm to have informal conversations and snack time with them while waiting for parents to pick up their children from 2.30 to 5 pm. I was invited to play with a girl diagnosed with autism and SLD who, that day, had not allowed the teacher to play with her. I employed Intensive Interaction with that pupil and noticed that the teacher watched me with interest. I came up with the idea that allowing the teachers to watch my practice style may make them feel more comfortable and confident to try Intensive Interaction in their own way. The next day, I asked the teacher to record my Intensive Interaction session and then also asked her opinion about my practice. This way of working was similar to Ruck's (2010) method. She offered her self-modelling by doing her own Intensive Interaction session and invited staff to observe and join in the session and then discussed the practice together.

Effectively, I found that letting teachers observe my teaching style had a positive impact. Importantly, they could observe my teaching style. However, this was not a signal to the teacher to 'do as I do', but I was telling them that this was my idea coming from the principles of Intensive Interaction. The emphasis here was that we were learning together. It was a trial and error, which means, sometimes, we feel success, but sometimes we feel otherwise. Afterwards, the teachers were more confident and their frequent questions 'am I doing right?' were significantly reduced. After that time, the teachers seemed comfortable seeing me around the classroom to observe their Intensive Interaction when we were both available, even without an appointment. As the pupils were familiar with me, often they left the teachers' session and came to me, and this time the teachers could observe my



teaching as well. The teachers expressed that they rarely had an opportunity to observe the 'A-jan' teaching approach. Since they were teacher-students, they were lectured how to teach and were monitored, but never observed the teaching of the A-jan in a real situation. Observing my teaching sessions facilitated the teachers to share more of their experiences during the interviews as well.

In the implementation process, the teachers' tiredness and workload pressures sometimes limited the amount of action. When these were mentioned, they were never motivated to carry out Intensive Interaction. Compromise and negotiation were operated throughout the implementation process. As Nind and Hewett (2005) also noted 'too task-oriented an approach may be counter-productive' (mentioned in Samuel, Nind, Volans and Scriven, 2008). I learnt the teacher's tiredness and workload could negatively impact on their implementation of Intensive Interaction. Nind, (2003) suggested that time to step back, think and talk were important. Attentively listening, having empathy for the teachers' tiredness, thoughts and talk were an important tool to link to the next action.

### **Teamwork and the Impact of Thai Hierarchy**

Nind and Hewett (2001; 2005) recommended the advantages of team working such as for improving individual teaching, and sharing ideas and workload. In this study, for the main reason of the Thai hierarchical structure in school, team working could not be adopted as the norm. Although all participant teachers were class teachers and had full authority of their pupils in their classroom, not all of them could manage regular daily one-to-one sessions. The effective implementation did not depend only on authority, but also seniority and relationship. For instance Daleeka was a class teacher and was in a senior position. She had ten pupils in her class with no support staff but she could ask a junior staff member to help her manage the whole class and Daleeka moved to a separate room for individual sessions with consenting pupils every day. She was the one who could make the Intensive

Interaction session happen daily and enjoyed this within her role. However, Benjaporn, a young class teacher, had twelve pupils and a senior teacher helper in her class. She, however, could not ask her helper to take care of the class when she wanted to do one-to-one sessions with her pupils in another room. The seniority of the support staff, who she called her 'Pee', made her feel uncomfortable or Kreng jai to ask. Benjaporn had to find the right time to do Intensive Interaction within her class. This also concurs with what Hannan, English, and Silver (1999) noted, in that 'it is easier to innovate when in a position of seniority'.

It is interesting to note that some degree of team approach occurred for a month after the end of the school term. We invited the parents to take their children to school for an Intensive Interaction hour. Teachers used Intensive Interaction with their pair for one hour a day for five days a week. It was this time that they did not have a workload and felt relaxed and active to do Intensive Interaction. Most of us gathered in the physical education room, which was a big room with one side having a mirror wall and equipment such as a toy house and big bouncing balls. Teacher-pupil interactive pairs were joyful and constantly implemented. Teachers often worked as a team where they would take turns using Intensive Interaction with other pupils, who were not their interactive pair and some teachers also arranged and co-operated in fun games and invited pupils to join in. At this time, we noticed the rapid progression in pupils' social and communication abilities. More importantly, the pupils' generalisation of skills was clearly observed by many teachers. We saw that many pupils with autism and SLD initiated play with other teachers available in the room. Interestingly, we were all surprised by a seven year old boy with autism and SLD, who never allowed people near him, showing his strong desire to participate in playing 'games' with a group of teachers by queuing in the row without being told to do so. When his turn came, he lay down on the floor by himself and waited for teachers to begin the game. The pupils' rapid progress from interactive team working made the teachers develop an idea of organisational reform, with a change from full day school for one group of pupils towards half day school for two groups of pupils. This idea is now being considered in an up-top policy.

In team working, teachers learnt from watching each other and some teachers also exchanged ideas and reflected on what happened in the session, but its degree was quite limited, which is discussed later in the section below.

### **The Cultural Challenge of Exchange Knowledge**

The difficulty in encouraging the teachers to reflect on their practice and exchange ideas in groups was another issue of implementation. A group of teachers participating in workshops were reluctant to express their reflections and discuss their thinking regarding the use of Intensive Interaction with the group. Some teachers wrote their own reflection in note books. Similarly, Samuel et al (2008) mentioned the difficulties in engaging practitioners in reflecting on their practice. Their staff were reluctant to complete reflection records and attend support groups. In this study, the group included teachers of varying ages and sometimes the director also attended. In general, an expression of personal thinking is regarded as unimportant and knowledge discussion is very limited amongst Thais (Prpic and Kanjanapanyakom, 2004) because of the characteristics of Thai interaction in collectivism, high power distance, and high uncertainty avoidance, which is recognized as a barrier to knowledge sharing (Hofstede, 2010). The teachers often did not realise their personal contribution to knowledge and tried to avoid speaking their opinion to the group so as to prevent any discussion that might occur. As discussed in Chapter 3, the discussion of different ideas is regarded as an 'assault' to the ego self of others, not only their ideas (Komin, 1991). Consequently, they all often express their opinion in the same direction as the group in order to avoid conflict, to 'give face' to others and to maintain group harmony.

Importantly, all teachers in this study used to study in the same university where the hierarchical system of senior and junior relationships strongly functions more than is usual. In Thai universities, there is the system called SOTUS: standing for 1) seniority, 2) order, 3) tradition, 4) unity and 5) spirit. This system has been adopted in a large number of Thai universities for

several decades and is widely applied with first-year students aiming at promoting these five goals. It is used to develop a sense of love for their institute and of harmony among 'freshies', and to promote feelings of listening and respect to the senior staff even after they finish university. The SOTUS system, however, impacts on expressing and discussing different ideas between senior and junior university students. Currently, this issue is at the centre of many debates in educational systems, with calls for the Thai SOTUS system to be reformed or terminated (Saengpassa, 2011; Suwattana, 2011) Pongsawat, Suwattana, and Lakhana, 2011; Lakhana, 2011).

This group of teachers worked together as members of a family where emotions, relationships and harmony were priority, rather than work-oriented goals. These factors have meant it was harder to encourage them to reflect and discuss their ideas for knowledge sharing. It would be seen as culturally inappropriate for me to facilitate them to speak up to the group with the aim of data collection as hidden resistance would emerge and this would weaken the good relationship and respect which were at the heart of making this project a success (Holmes and Tangtongtavy (1997). Nevertheless, informal conversation throughout the fieldwork and repeated-interviews could be supplementary sources working within this cultural limitation. In Thai collectivism, when individually informal conversations happened, they tended to speak freely. At the same time, they would compare and contrast their opinions and practices to those of their colleagues.

### **Generalisability from the Research Findings**

Hermeneutic phenomenological study intends to produce deep and broad accounts of people's experiences. The findings emerging from the participants produce themes grounded in data that provided ample information in depth and breadth for the understanding of pedagogical perceptions. My inductive findings offer understandings that others who work in similar situations can draw on. Rather than emphasising that the findings can be directly generalised, the generalisability of this study is based on the development of a theory that can be extended to other similar cases or

similar persons or situations. Bassey (2001, p. 11) offered a 'fuzzy' generalisation, a form of a range of predictions, which infer the findings to 'similar people-events-situations' (p. 17). Winter (2002, p. 144) said that findings were 'an account of a specific situation that gets sufficiently close to its underlying structure to enable others to see potential similarities with other situations'. Therefore, the work in my study offers understandings that others can draw on if they are working in similar ways. Rather than absolute practical application, my work offers the theoretical understandings of Thai practitioners' practical values that other practitioners can relate, compare and contrast with these cases against their own cultural context.

## Conclusion

In this chapter I have discussed the research design employed in this study, including the prepared training materials to a two-day training course, the training intervention strategies, and the sampling and recruitment strategies. The chapter then addressed ethical considerations for all parties involved in this study: teachers, pupils with autism and SLD and their caregivers, directors and the principal, the applications of being an insider researcher and the strategies of developing educators' practice during the period of data collection: school teaching visits and half-day workshops. The second half of this chapter concentrated on the justifications of methods used for data collection. These include the use of repeated semi-structured in-depth interviews, active participant observation, focus group interviews and research diaries. These methods are all consistent with the methodologies as specified in chapter four. Finally, the chapter described the data analytical process and presented the discussion of the rigour and trustworthiness in this research, as well as the critical reflections on doing my research in the Thai context. In the following chapter I will present the findings of this study interwoven with the theoretical frameworks in chapters two and three, and the interpretative process of hermeneutical phenomenology.

## Chapter Six: The Presentation of Perceptions of the Use of Intensive Interaction in Thai Culture

### Introduction

This chapter presents the major themes which emerged from analysis of all the data and provides an in-depth understanding of the Thai teachers' experiences of the implementation of Intensive Interaction. Four themes emerged from the data: 1) becoming a responsive teacher: the challenge of the transition process, 2) factors encouraging the use of Intensive Interaction in the Thai school context, 3) perceived barriers to Intensive Interaction in the Thai school context, and 4) supporting the sustainability of Intensive Interaction in the Thai school context. Each of these main themes has a number of sub-themes. The study incorporates an interpretive paradigm that explored the most likely possible interpretations around the major themes to understand the participants' views. The series of quotations from the teachers' interviews will be interspersed throughout the descriptions of each theme in order to support the interpretation. Some quotations were extracted verbatim in one specific transcript of teachers' interviews but some quotations were amalgamated from more than one transcript in order to provide the more sufficiently informative and thick quotations for presentation. The thematic analysis of the perception of the Intensive Interaction teaching approach of Thai teachers is presented in table 6.1 below.

THEME	SUB-THEME
One: Becoming a responsive teacher—The challenge of transition process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Role of the teacher and duty of pupils</li> <li>• Attitude to play in children’s development and the cultural imperative</li> <li>• Awareness of social experiences and initiated-communication</li> <li>• The interface of the responsive process and objective-based teaching</li> <li>• Improvement and change in teachers’ teaching practice</li> </ul>
Two: Factors encouraging the use of Intensive Interaction in the Thai school context	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Start from the sceptical mind</li> <li>• Positive responses from the pupils</li> <li>• The value of naturalistic approach</li> <li>• Motivation from caregivers</li> </ul>
Three: Perceived barriers to Intensive Interaction in the Thai school context	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inconsistency in teaching opportunities</li> <li>• Suspicious looks from outsiders</li> </ul>
Four: Supporting the sustainability of Intensive Interaction in the Thai school context	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Formally structured in organisation or in IEP</li> <li>• Teacher training</li> <li>• Parent training</li> <li>• Resources</li> </ul>

**Table 6.1: Themes and sub-themes of the perception of the use of Intensive Interaction**

## **Theme One: Becoming a Responsive Teacher –The Challenge of the Transition Process**

The first major theme consists of five sub-themes. The first sub-theme refers to the traditional role of the teacher and the duty of pupils which were affected by Intensive Interaction adoption. Second, it presents the cultural attitude to play in children's development and the impact of play on the role of the teacher. Then, it provides the viewpoints of Thai teachers about the awareness of social experiences and initiated-communication for their pupils. Fourth, it presents the interface of responsive process and objective-based teaching. It describes the effect the Intensive Interaction approach had on how the teachers experienced the challenge for deviating from the teacher-controlled teaching towards the responsive teaching approach. The last sub-theme described the extent and degree of changes in teachers' teaching practices. It describes how Thai teachers observed changes from their traditional teaching approach as a result of the use of a new pedagogy of Intensive Interaction.

### **Role of the Teacher and Duty of Pupils**

The Intensive Interaction approach challenged the Thai traditional role of teacher and the concept of teaching and learning. Thai teachers underwent a sense of radical position change from their cultural understandings of what it means to a 'teacher' and 'teaching'. As a country of high power distance and collectivism, the role of the teacher is in a higher status and treats a pupil as inferior. The teachers often play their role in hierarchical authority and are treated with respect. The Thai traditional teaching and learning approach is directed and controlled by the teacher with rote-teaching and learning. In contrast, Intensive Interaction stresses child-led activities with sharing power and giving pupil empowerment, and this challenges the Thai traditional role of teacher and the teaching model. When implementing Intensive Interaction, teachers expressed their feelings about the differences between the position



of being a teacher in Intensive Interaction and the position of being a teacher to which they were accustomed in traditional teaching:

“I found it’s the difference in how to position myself. The former practice is that we are teachers, we have to teach. We have to be in a position where the children acknowledge we are their teachers whom they have to listen to with respect and be afraid of so they will follow what we tell them to. But this one [Intensive Interaction], mostly we let the pupils lead us and we only follow along and respond, which I found is completely difference”. (Lalita)

In this excerpt, Lalita was describing her perception of the meaning of ‘teacher’ and ‘teaching’. She perceived the traditional role of teacher as making the pupils afraid of her teacher’s role and higher status so that the pupils will be afraid of her and follow her direction with great respect and obedience to teachers’ authority. During Intensive Interaction sessions, Lalita felt a profound change to her inherited role of teacher and the concept of teaching. In the new way of teaching, she felt that she was being a follower, not a leader as in a traditional teaching approach. Areeya recounted a similar viewpoint:

“You know, as a teacher we have to teach pupils to acknowledge that we are their teacher who they have to obey. They have to listen to us with respect and to do as they are told. It is their duty. Children [with SLD] can know who their teachers are and they will obey only their teachers. You know, if children do not obey and are not afraid of us, how we can teach them?” (Areeya)

Areeya described her feeling of an embedded and rigorous sense of the role of the Thai traditional teacher, who has to remind the pupils of their role as teacher and teach in a high position and with authority. The pupils were expected to be passive and obedient, and to listen and do as they were ordered with respect to the teacher’s power. This expectation was

recognised as ‘the duty of pupils’ in Thai classroom culture. The view of the relationship between the role of the teacher and the duty of the pupil is deeply fixed by these expectations and has its roots in the Thai values of hierarchical social systems and grateful relationships or *bunkhun*, as discussed in chapter 3. Areeya held strictly to this image which seemed to be a barrier for empowering the pupils and for fostering the assertive and autonomous characteristic intended in Intensive Interaction. Lalita described the impact of shifting from the teacher’s role as a leader toward that as a follower on her first impressions:

“My very first feeling was we were about to indulge the kids, from my opinion. We must let them lead. We have to put down everything and let them start. So, at the beginning, I felt strange and contrary to what we have done when we were the ones who set the activities for them to do. Whether they were interested, we would just train them”. (Lalita)

Lalita’s example showed how she perceived the new role of the teacher as a responsive partner in Intensive Interaction. She told us that child-directed activity was viewed at the very first time as an ‘indulgence’ of a child. Indulgence implies the opposite side of ‘good discipline’ which was believed to be built by following the teacher’s orders. Culturally, apart from the familiarity with their traditional role of teacher in a hierarchical position with teacher-controlled learning direction, Thai teachers, as a second parent, also have to instil good values and morals into their pupils. Therefore, the Thai traditional role of teachers is often to entrench a strong controller’s role. Being a follower or a responsive teacher in Intensive Interaction made Lalita feel uneasy during the initial stage.

Lalita mentioned feeling a little embarrassed at first, and worried about the age-appropriateness that she saw as applying a ‘kid’s trick’ to someone grown’. She felt bashful about adopting the method for younger children with older ones, specifically making childish noises. Although some teachers

could do this automatically, Lalita thought it was hard when she first started because it opposed her feelings. Talking about playing with older children, she commented:

“At the beginning, I didn’t know what to play with her because she was rather grown. But it was ok with younger kids...Playing with Nonny (Autism and SLD, 14 years old) for the first time I didn’t even have courage to make noises like little children because she’s grown. When I faced her in front of me, I only saw a girl teenager...It’s contrary. It was hard at the beginning. It’s a bit embarrassing to play a kid’s trick to someone grown”. (Lalita)

After the initial stage, Lalita accustomed herself to adjusting her teaching role as a hierarchical and authority figure and joined in with pupils. She described the positive changes of her feeling in the teacher’s role:

“Now, we can play and we better get along. I don’t have to be strictly aware of my status as a teacher. What I like is we demote ourselves to meet with the kids half way. It’s easier to get along with them. Other methods completely separate teachers’ status from pupils’. But this one, we meet half way”. (Lalita)

Here, Lalita told of her feeling of changing her teacher’s role in Thai tradition and she did not need to remind herself of that role. She implied that her feeling of being a controller teacher was reduced. During Intensive Interaction sessions, to some extent, she allowed the pupil to be in charge and in control of her own activities. She implied that the negotiation between being a controller and follower allowed her to meet the needs of the pupil halfway. Meeting halfway facilitated her to get along better with her pupil. Lalita talked about how her feeling of being a new mother of a 3-month old baby seemed to soften her feeling of being a controller. She often brought her baby girl to the school and she also started the use of Intensive Interaction with her baby.

All teachers in this study recognised the cultural meaning of the role of teacher and teaching, and the duty of pupils in the Thai classroom, but in practice they applied them to varying degrees. Some of the teachers did not strictly embrace the traditional role of a teacher. For example, Malisa, a senior teacher who also has a musical skill and often used musical equipment in her teaching activity, showed her viewpoint on the role of the teacher:

“When I teach children it’s more like we are playing with children. I keep in mind that to approach children, I have to be one of them. We are naturally their friends. So when this way becomes a teaching technique, I feel this is what I’m always like. I don’t care that others will think that I don’t perform like a teacher”. (Malisa)  
(My emphasis).

Malisa clearly considered her role to be a friend to her pupils rather than as a performing the role of teacher in a way that is culturally expected by others. Here, Malisa implied that she knew the concept of being a Thai teacher, but she did not fully conform. She also showed her feeling of confidence to be in the teacher’s role that she preferred. She implied that her playful teaching style was not a general way of teaching expected by other teachers and outsiders around her.

Since my first visit of the Intensive Interaction teaching session, Malisa demonstrated her nature to readily connect to Intensive Interaction principles and employed it with a 13 year old girl with autism and SLD. She showed her ability to tune in rapidly with her pupil without the barrier of body hierarchy and head as some teachers, like Areeya, felt. She naturally laid on the floor [the consenting pupil was leaning on the floor while other pupils worked in groups] and imitated her pupil’s behaviour by playing with her own figures, while smiling, even though she used to think that by repeatedly playing with figures, her pupil was demonstrating a weak point that she had previously intended to eliminate. Her natural use of silence, minimal

language, pauses and celebrations were well employed. Her personality, beliefs and confidence rapidly connected her to the child's world.

Benjaporn provided another example of the notion of the traditional role of teacher from her perspective:

"I don't like children to be afraid of me. If children fear us they won't come near us. I want to have children near me, smile and be willing to come when I want them. Here we were trained to be in a high status over children. Teacher and children are separated in different places, different corners. We have to make them afraid of us as we are their teacher. Otherwise we will be unable to control them for discipline and cannot teach. But I don't like that way".  
(Benjaporn)

Benjaporn described her feelings of dislike towards the idea of being a teacher in keeping with dominant customs. She did not like the traditional classroom of having a hierarchy where the teacher should make the pupils afraid of her. Pupils were separated to be in their place in silence and could only come and communicate when the teacher wanted them to. In my observation, Benjaporn was rather against the traditional role of teacher where it made pupils passive and did not encourage them to initiate or express their thought, feelings and needs. Benjaporn preferred to enable pupils to freely express their feelings and needs without fear of the teacher's authority. Here, we knew how Benjaporn was trained to be a teacher in the Thai classroom. It also reminded us that whilst Areeya and Lalita adopted the training experiences in their work with pupils with autism and SLD, Benjaporn did it in a contrary way. The next extract provides a perspective from the only male teacher in this study, which highlighted the role of men in Thai culture as described by Sivaluck:

"Sometimes I felt irritated and annoyed to be controlled by children. I don't understand why we have to follow them because we

normally lead. We have to recognise they're the leader of the activities, it's like they forced us to play with them. So deeply, as they're the leaders and have to pull us towards them, I feel it's a bit awkward". (Sivaluck)

Sivaluck described, during the early stages, irritation and annoyance at letting the children be in charge of the teaching activity, which normally was led by the teacher. Sometimes he felt pupils were forcing his actions and this made him feel irritated as they demanded he play along and let the pupil lead. In keeping with the role of leader and the assertive nature of many men in Thai society as described in Thai femininity, p. 77-78, Sivaluck tended to be more dominant and overriding in his personality than Thai female teachers in this study. He felt more challenged to be in a child-led activity that seemed to impact on the personality of men more than women. Although annoyed, Sivaluck appeared relaxed, flexible, creative and confident during Intensive Interaction sessions. This was possibly because he normally had the nature of loving to play with pupils in his teacher-led style. He also had a sense of humour and was not entrenched in the role of teacher by keeping pupils distant and making them fear him.

Despite their various adoptions and practices of the teacher's role they all recognised its cultural meaning and expectations in Thai society. It seemed, because of this recognition, all Thai teachers in my study have highlighted their experiences as not feeling like they were in 'a role of teacher'. When referring to their role in Intensive Interaction, teachers used words such as 'friends' and 'someone who has similar age', not like traditional teachers or 'parents', to describe their feelings toward their pupils. As Areeya and Neelanoot commented:

"With Intensive Interaction, we feel it's informal to be with the children. It feels like we live together like a mother and a child".  
(Areeya)

“When I played with them, they may have felt like I am as a friend of them, something like that, not as a teacher”. (Neelanoot)

Dareeka described why she did not perform like a teacher and moved towards the new role of ‘older kid’ when doing Intensive Interaction sessions.

“We act as if we are an older kid to them, not the teachers. When we play with children, we will feel like we are kids too. It’s more like siblings who have a very narrow gap between their ages. If our ages are too far apart, it’s hard to talk. But if it’s only a few years then it’s much easier to talk”. (Dareeka)

Here, Dareeka talked about removing her hierarchy and authority in the teacher’s role by acting more like ‘a child’ whose age was not very far apart from the age of the pupil. Doing this would narrow the gap between the teacher’s status in a high power distance and the inferior position of the pupil, which then facilitated a flat line pupil-teacher interaction to allow two-way communication to occur between her and the pupil. Dareeka described the vertical interaction within the Thai school context that tends to be more authoritarian with one-way communication from teacher to pupils. Whilst Intensive Interaction requires teachers to communicate responsively with, and empower, the pupils, like Dareeka, all teachers in this research removed the hierarchy and authority of the teachers’ role toward ‘other roles’ where they did not feel like a traditional Thai teacher. This helped to foster the occurrence of play and two-way communication.

## Attitude to Play in Children's Development and the Culture Imperative:

### The Impact of Play on the Role of Thai Teacher

The central elements of Intensive Interaction are mutual pleasure and a fun atmosphere. Attitude to play is a key component that considerably influences Intensive Interaction implementation for a group of special education teachers in this study. The different attitudes toward play of these teachers could be an accelerator or barrier to their practice in this new way of pedagogy. The Thai teachers held different attitudes and values towards play. The excerpt from Areeya below provides a clear example of teachers in Thai high power distance society on the traditional attitudes and values to the concept of play:

“Normally, we did not play much with pupils because they would get used to it and not want to learn or work. When they played they had fun and did not want to learn. When they saw us they only wanted to play and sometimes they would not obey us because they were not afraid of us”. (Areeya)

Areeya was describing that playing with pupils will make them familiar with play and not want to learn. The fun-play was not considered to contribute to children's learning. Importantly, the result of play may reduce fear in pupils and lead to a reduction of obedience. Areeya implied teachers should not normally play with pupils; rather they should position themselves in 'high place' to make pupils *Kreng Jai*, leading to didactic teaching and classroom management. Playing with pupils negatively affected the role of the traditional teacher that Areeya had embedded. A similar negative attitude about play, but with different reasons, was recounted by Jutima:

“I wonder why kids need to play, why children waste their time with playing. I often have a high expectation of objective teaching



with intention to give them 'something'. I did my best to teach them. Yet they did not get as I expected them to. Mostly they got 'nothing'. It was because we could not teach them so we thought we should not play with them. We did not need to spend time with playing. They are not like normal developing children. We must be serious with teaching to make them learn. We often force them to learn". (Jutima)

Jutima described a negative idea of play. She wondered about the importance of play and children's learning was questioned repeatedly. Jutima considered play as useless and a waste of time, especially for children with SEN, unlike children with normal development who should learn rather than waste their time in play. She focused on objective teaching for developing the pupils. She intended to give the pupils 'something', which possibly meant the aspect of academic outcome. In the past, Jutima sometimes played along with her pupils with SLD and autism, but felt guilty as she thought that it wasted the pupil's time and the parents' money:

"And there I went for a flip-flop hand with the child because she loved it. And again, after a while I felt guilty because I wasted my time why did we flip-flop hand as the child did and why did the child have to waste her time in such play? The pupil's parents paid me to work, not to play. I always pressured myself [to teach according to her pre-planned objective] until I gave up". (Jutima)

In a contrasting point of view, Daleeka routinely offered to play with her pupils:

"Normally we play [teacher-led and controlled play] with the kids. For me, if we do not play with them I cannot teach them. You have to understand that teaching these kids, the content isn't difficult but it's hard in the fact that whether they will allow you to teach

them or not. I'm not like some teachers who do not need to play with the kids and they can teach them". (Daleeka)

Daleeka described the play she normally provided to her pupils. Compared with Areeya, Daleeka did not use her hierarchical inequality to make pupils fear her and maintain distance before teaching them. Play was applied to build a good relationship between Daleeka and her pupils, and then this relationship allowed her to teach the pupils. Benjaporn, a new teacher, described her experience of fun-play with her pupils as not maintaining traditional body hierarchy:

"It was the first time we had this. Intensive Interaction completely destroyed the strict rules between teachers and pupils. In the beginning, I had to face some complaints, especially with the questions, 'why allow children to sit on our laps?', or 'why let children ride on our shoulders and play with our heads?', so we had to hide. Actually over here, we were trained not to let any children sit on our lap, otherwise they will get used to it". (Benjaporn)

Benjaporn described that when Intensive Interaction was introduced, the cultural imperative of the perseverance of a higher position as being a *teacher* was diminished. This issue was raised in a school workplace with pupils ranging from 6-18 years old and focusing on pre-academic skills to prepare pupils for a regular school. Benjaporn felt relieved that she was no longer the focus of blame, which she had experienced earlier. She had persisted with her fun-play style with teacher-pupils equal position and was not welcomed here in the past. Generally, Thai teachers deem playing with equal positions between pupils and teacher as inappropriate. The distance between teachers and pupils should be strictly retained at all times in order to make students respect and obey teachers. Once Intensive Interaction was acknowledged as a teaching approach, Benjaporn felt relieved and independent from the blame of senior colleagues.

“Now I was not blamed anymore as everyone is doing the same thing. I just felt relieved. Earlier, there was a barrier hindering teachers from playing with the kids because we were used to the idea that we were not supposed to play too much. We couldn’t even let them play, ride pickaback, cuddle, or sit on our laps. Now Intensive Interaction exists, we can play in this way. I felt very good that Intensive Interaction was known in this place”.  
(Benjaporn)

The above shows that this type of fun-play without body hierarchy is often viewed as inappropriate and banned. This is the cultural rule of the setting, and impacts on judgements that adults make about the value of fun-play activity. Previously, the pattern of play is the pattern that teachers directed and controlled: play while retaining body hierarchy. Fun-play with physical contact and lap play was considered inappropriate. Benjaporn repeatedly stated that she was forbidden to play with pupils and pupils were not allowed to be so close to the teachers, such as letting pupils sit on the teacher’s lap. The prohibition of playing in this manner may be explained by the cultural need to maintain an inequality of status between teacher and pupils. As mentioned in chapter 3 Thai teachers, traditionally, place their status higher than those of pupils in order to maintain a distance and gain a respect. As the level of the head is very important, the pupil should not touch the teacher’s head or hair and are not supposed to sit on the teacher’s lap. Thus, lap play and allowing pupils to be in the same position as the teacher is considered to decrease the teacher’s status to that of pupils, and may result in disrespect from the pupils to the teacher. If this happens, Thai traditional teaching will be negatively affected. As a result, they cannot make pupils obey their instructions. Likewise, the teacher is not supposed to lean against the pupils, raise them up and get too close to them. She was criticised by senior teachers for allowing fun-play on her lap and letting pupils touch her hair.

As Thailand is a high power distance and collectivist society, it values seniority systems, and prefers everyone in school to practice in the same way. Difference is seen as a deviation from desirable norms. If a younger teacher treats pupils differently from senior teachers, she will often be told to do it in the same way as the senior teachers. In the Thai seniority system, the younger teachers have to adjust themselves to the older ones. Therefore, Benjaporn, who disagreed with the seniors, did it in secret. When the school adopted Intensive Interaction, Benjaporn felt relieved and free from the blame of the senior teachers.

### **A Dichotomy between Play and Learning**

Previously, play was not undertaken to educate or teach skills to pupils. The concept of play was not related to pupils' learning and development. All of the teachers articulated a clear separation between teaching and playing and these two activities had never been blended as a simultaneous process. Generally, play is recognised as only fun, and of less value or even unimportant. It should only be offered when pupils complete their tasks. There were some teachers using play as a tool for building a relationship before teaching with a pre-planned activity led by teachers. Teachers further explained they did not have knowledge to develop play into teaching and learning processes. Consequently, play was not considered as a teaching device to be blended with the teaching and learning process to educate the pupils. As a result, there was a dichotomy between education and mutual pleasure or play:

“We used to play with them but never thought it would be a way of teaching. We completely separated teaching from playing. Playing at the same time as teaching had never happened”. (Dareeka)

Whilst the notion of the role of the teacher, and attitudes to play, were perceived differently between them, all teachers articulated that during

Intensive Interaction they felt they did 'not teach, only play'. As Chaleeta and Benjaporn described:

"My feeling is that every time I do [Intensive Interaction] I do not think that it is the process of teaching. I rarely think about it. I feel more like playing and, as a result, children also get benefit from playing". (Chaleeta)

"It (Intensive Interaction) is play. I felt I was playing, not teaching. For me if we play and teach at the same time it is not fun". (Benjaporn)

Within the culturally-perceived definition of 'teaching' as teacher-centred model where teachers take control of the teaching and learning situation and 'teach' pupils how to do the social and communicative skills by pre-planned objectives, this teaching method was called serious work, which caused pressure for both the teacher and pupil. By just joining in with pupils' preferred method of play without any control and pressure, the teacher felt they 'only play, not teach':

"During Intensive Interaction, my feeling is different from the normal teaching. It is about placing my position. For example, when we walked and played along with her without telling her what to do or how to play as usual. We feel like we are playing, not teaching. We feel like we are one of her friends". (Lalita)

This feeling of 'only play, 'not teach' concurs with that of not being in 'a role of teacher' as discussed in the role of teacher and duty of pupils. It seems that Thai teachers tried to preserve their hierarchical social system by temporarily suspending 'the role of teacher', and thus stopped teaching. Instead, they moved towards 'the role of a friend of the pupil,' and started playing.

## Awareness of Social Experiences and Initiated-Communication

As mentioned previously, in Thai culture, pre-academic and structured work was the general purpose of education for pupils with SEN. The preparation of pre-academic skills, gross and fine motor skills and self-help skills were generally focused on in Thai special education schools in order to prepare pupils for the next stage of learning. Play was not linked to the development of social and communication abilities. As discussed previously, some teachers used play as a tool for building pupils' mood and capturing their attention before the teacher could teach the pre-planned work:

“We used to play briefly with the kids to set them in a good mood and then we taught the other skills [not social-communication ability] such as gross and fine motor and pre-academic skills”.  
(Rattana)

It is also important to present how teachers viewed the importance of teaching the fundamental ability to communicate before Intensive Interaction was introduced. This view may be important as the need for an intervention goal seemed to influence to the degree of success in implementing innovation (Fullan, 2007). Although some teachers recognised the need of social and communication competence for pupils with autism and SLD, all teachers in this study clearly articulated that they did not previously establish social ability as an educational goal for pupils with SEN. Teaching social abilities is often not considered important and a primary purpose for pupils in special education schools. They all plan their teaching objectives for the development of pre-academic skills, gross and fine motor skills and self-help skill ability. Jutima, a senior teacher, explained that she borrowed the curriculum and teaching method from the general early years school but adjusted it to lessen the content and taught it more individually:

“Previously, the teaching method for children with severe autism was the same method as normal developing children. We wanted them to get the same knowledge as the children in a demonstration school [kindergarten school]. In the past, we taught as a unit of study or subject such as mathematics, art and natural world as the same subject as a general kindergarten school did. But we reduced the content and used more individual teaching... I have never experienced in teaching such [social] skill before, we all have never. We have never recognised its importance before”.  
(Jutima)

Presently, most teachers in the study shifted from traditional approaches of kindergarten school towards TEACCH programmes in which social-communication development was not addressed as a part of the programme. The TEACCH programme was defined as a learning schedule run by fixed pictures in which teachers would combine the teaching of self-help ability and pre-academic skills. Since such abilities are the basic needs required from pupils with SEN to obtain a place in an integrated school, these skills are thus the main purpose to teach in a special education school. In the context of the special school, such skills should be taught as soon as possible because of the necessity to remove pupils from the special education school system in order to give places for a number of prospective pupils in each academic year. Moreover, teaching these skills is a response to the satisfaction of parents of pupils who wanted their children to obtain ‘something’—an academic thing—so as to get a place in regular school. The teachers mentioned they were expected by parents to teach their children with SEN the same as those normally developing in a kindergarten school.

The lack of awareness of the importance of teaching social and communication abilities to pupils with SEN seemed to link to the values of a pupil’s good characteristics. As discussed in Chapter 3, with Thai collectivism, most teachers have a traditionally pictured expectation of good pupil characteristics. This expectation includes being quiet in class, speaking when invited by the teacher, doing what the teacher tells you to do and

having no argument. Benjaporn described Thai teachers' expectations of a good pupil's characteristics that are consistent with my own observations throughout this study:

“The pupils won't be allowed to do anything and turn out to be sitting still, wasting time and inattentive. Just like this [sat absent-mindedly]. They feel they can't do anything. The teachers will only think it's okay, it's good for the pupils to remain calm and have good discipline. The pupils may look up at you but passively, and may do whatever you ask. If the pupils do something that they have not been ordered, they would get scolded. This only discourages the pupils from thinking and they will only wait for orders”. (Benjaporn)

Benjaporn articulates the norm of the pupils' desirable characteristics for a traditional teacher. Culturally, pupils are expected to wait to be told and are not supposed to initiate communication and express any thought and feeling in classroom. With the nature of the Thai hierarchical and collective society, it may seem that there is no motivation for teachers to encourage a pupil to have developed social and communication competence.

The teaching session aimed at developing language abilities occurred in extra sessions after school time. Some of the pupils' parents arranged one-to-one sessions for their children with the teachers. These children were mostly diagnosed with autism. Two teaching techniques were adopted for teaching pupils to speak words. Firstly, the teaching style used the same technique for pupils with hearing impairment, with a step-by-step training through the use of mirrors and pictures. The teacher taught the pupil to imitate the teacher's speech according to a pre-planned set of words in front of the mirror, and gave rewards such as a piece of chocolate once the pupil produced a correct word. Secondly, the teacher used a technique developed for pupils with autism using pre-planned academic toys and the set of words for teaching pupils to speak. Both techniques were teacher-controlled table-



top activities based on the behavioural principle. Social skills were taught by emphasising the skill to look at the teacher's face and give eye contact, but without social interaction or having fun between them. Intensive Interaction was the first recognised teaching approach that focuses on facilitating social and communication abilities by using child-led fun play activity:

“Intensive Interaction is... like a gift, another piece of gift to help us with teaching. Earlier, there was completely no method to approach the pupils using complete interactions like this one, not at all, not even anything to make them laugh happily. We have never come to this point. We used to only call them by name and tell them what to do, for example, sit down like this then practice and practice (speech production) which could be very stressful and the pupils don't have much chance to interact socially”.  
(Malisa)

### **The Interface between the Responsive Process and Objective-based Teaching**

The responsive teaching approach of Intensive Interaction was perceived both positively and negatively amongst the teachers. Following a tradition of rigorous teacher-controlled pedagogy, the teaching technique used was pre-planned activities with a set of words for pupils to imitate the teacher's speech. The technique was a linear step with obvious structured activity controlled by the teachers from start to finish. The pre-planned teaching outcome was mainly focused on the limits of building the social relationship and mutual pleasure. Conversely, Intensive Interaction is spontaneous and responsive. The teaching process is not a linear teaching pattern and it may not be taught as an orderly structure. Interaction focuses on the response to the interactive process that a pupil creates and allows her/him control over her/his direction of learning. This is not in a familiar pattern for the teachers.

In general, teachers were categorised into three groups: those with an autonomous feeling, a loss of autonomous feeling, and a fluctuating feeling.

### **An Autonomous Feeling**

Some teachers in the study were able to adjust themselves towards responsive teaching. They articulated that Intensive Interaction reduced their stress and anxiety in trying to carry the pupils forward with their assignments to reach the objectives they had pre-planned, which the pupils mostly failed to achieve. This caused tensions amongst teachers and the pupils themselves were unhappy. While applying the responsiveness of Intensive Interaction, they experienced fun and were relaxed:

“The reason I like Intensive Interaction is it’s fun and I’m happy to do it. It’s not tiring or stressful because we respond accordingly to what the children do. When we planned the activities [using picture and word for speech training] that the children couldn’t do, we were stressed and the children were unhappy”. (Dareeka)

These teachers showed the abilities of creative and flexible roles in designing play environments and were willing to explore a variety of ways to achieve their goals in a new way of teaching. Importantly, Dareeka, and other teachers in her group indicated, an uncomfortable feeling about the didactic method and therefore were eager to try a new way of working:

“Pupils with autism will stick too much to schedule. If something does not happen according to the schedule, they cry a lot. When they go outside or move to other school it will cause a problem because the outside is flexible and uncertain, and they cannot deal with it... And now pupils do not need to speak anymore because everything is scheduled. When they want to go to the toilet, they just pick up the picture and give it to me, they do not need to communicate to anyone, just pick up the picture and get

what they want. I think this is the weak point of TEACCH".  
(Benjaporn)

Here, Benjaporn articulated the pitfalls of her current teaching programme. She concluded that, although TEACCH programmes helped the pupils know what would orderly occur in a daily routine, and this helped the pupils to be calm and do things by themselves better, this programme did not facilitate the flexible thinking and communicative ability which pupils with autism need.

Malisa is another example of someone who tried to search for a new way of teaching to develop social and communicative abilities for her pupils with autism and SLD:

"I have been seeking a teaching technique to develop social and communicative skills for pupils with SLD and autism. The existing teaching methods we have are stressful for both the pupils and me. The latest teaching technique that I've been trained is Floor Time technique, but it did not work with my pupils". (Malisa)

Malisa preferred teaching within a playful atmosphere. She found that all previous teaching approaches were not pleasurable for both the pupils and her. Floor Time was the latest technique that she was very interested in but could not employ it with pupils with SLD and autism.

After implementing Intensive Interaction, these teachers articulated that the pupils obeyed them more and were willing to do things as the teachers asked them to. Benjaporn described doing things or other activities was faster than before

"Being with us, she thinks she can trust us. After that, it's like we can talk, we can tell. She believes me more. We have more good

understandings. She is now able to do what she has to do faster and understand more what I said". (Benjaporn)

Sivaluck mentioned that he used to wonder why children did not follow the activity that he normally led. After Intensive Interaction sessions he stated:

"Now I know if we want a child to follow us we have to follow him first. Intensive Interaction helps me to have control over the child".  
(Sivaluck)

These teachers further confirmed that this approach could improve teachers' attitudes to work and confidence in teaching. They felt they were more able to deal with their pupils than ever before, both in teaching sessions and in daily activity. The pupils' obedience and willingness to do as they were told were repeatedly reported amongst the teachers:

"I'm confident in teaching 100 percent. The more I can play with them the more I feel confident. I feel I can understand them much better. Now I feel I am able to handle them more and that they are willing to do what I ask them to more than before". (Dareeka)

### **A Loss of Autonomous Feeling**

For Areeya, however, responsive teaching provided an uncomfortable challenge. Whereas Intensive Interaction was perceived by the above teachers as simple, fun and relaxing, Areeya maintained that it was complicated, exhausting, and stressful:

"Sometimes, it's hard and I feel stressed. I think, think and think hard. Sometimes my head hurts as we cannot interpret what the children mean, what they want us to do and so we were rejected. It seems like the children felt guilty when they cannot do what they were

told by us. Likewise, I felt anxious when I did the thing that was not right as the children wanted". (Areeya)

As the communicative exchange of Intensive Interaction needs interpretation and joining in with what pupils were doing and exploring, Areeya found that it was difficult because she could not interpret what some pupils meant. She found it was hard to respond appropriately and consequently was rejected. She sometimes described her feeling of being anxious, guilty and unsuccessful during teaching sessions. Areeya compared her own feelings of anxiety and guilt when she could not provide the 'right' response the pupils wanted with the same feeling of pupils who felt anxious and guilty when they could not do as they were expected by the teacher.

Areeya found it difficult to respond in child-led play. She had a limited willingness to prepare for any learning that immediately happens. During Intensive Interaction sessions, I observed that it was quite difficult for Areeya to use appropriate 'pauses' or 'waiting' and thus she often had a one-way interactive play with her pupils. Although Areeya and her pupils had a fun time and the pupils laughed a lot, the session was often initiated by the teacher. The use of fewer pauses resulted in the pupils often waiting for her to start.

As mentioned previously, Areeya has a strong idea of the traditional roles of teachers and the duty of pupils. She personally tended to be strict and distant from pupils, making pupils feel inferior to her. After Intensive Interaction sessions, Areeya wanted to step back into the role of controller and thus she perceived the result of Intensive Interaction as causing her a loss of control over her pupils:

"But somehow Intensive Interaction also has a downside that we have to play with them...After that, it's like they could step out from the frame and when we put them back in, they wouldn't listen to us. They think they used to be able to play with this person and

she never scolded at them, so they did not respect us, and wouldn't listen and follow what we told them to as before". (Areeya)

Areeya clearly pointed out that she lost some control over the pupils. She perceived that responsiveness to child-led play can cause the duty of pupils to start to slip out of the frame. As discussed in chapter 3, in the Thai classroom, teachers tend to control everything in their classes and make pupils afraid of them. Teachers felt comfortable in their authority and have power over pupils all the time. In Intensive Interaction sessions, the characteristic of child-led play teaching approaches built up familiarity and courage in pupils. It seemed that the teacher's authority and power were affected by the reduction of pupils' fear of the teacher and increasing pupils' assertiveness.

Since Areeya held strictly to the image of 'being Thai pupils' in a feminine oriented country, she emphasized the building of good characteristics and training discipline according to Thai custom in her pupils very much. This included respect, obedience and following without disagreement. If any pupil shows an opposite manner, they will be considered as disrespectful and disloyal to their own teacher and thus the teachers themselves will 'lose face', which is a significant matter for Thai teachers. Whilst some teachers, such as Benjaporn, Dareeka and Malisa were able to balance the role of controller and follower in teaching and felt their authority increased, Areeya maintained the loss of her authority. Adjusting and balancing her role as a teacher in two pedagogies was challenging.

Areeya perceived that the adoption of a playful sound in an Intensive Interaction session caused pupils to not be afraid of her:

"When we do Intensive Interaction, we use a soft and playful sound. We did not scold them. Children would get used to it and

wouldn't listen to us like the previous time. He wouldn't do as he was told. When he did something wrong and we told him to stop, he did not stop and still did it again. He did it again you know. This is the downside of playing with them, as they become familiar with us and do not fear us anymore". (Areeya)

Normally, Areeya used a sharp (hard) tone to control a child's behaviour and to manage her classroom. Conversely, in intensive Interaction, she used a soft and playful tone with pupils and she perceived this kind of sound built up familiarity, which caused pupils to disobey her orders when Areeya wanted to step back into the role of controller teacher. Areeya perceived that Intensive Interaction has built some characteristics that are inconsistent with the values that she held in Thai collectivism. These characteristics included expressing less fear toward the teachers, self-assertiveness, and being more autonomous. She considered these new characteristics as a downside of Intensive Interaction, which gave her an uncomfortable feeling as she preferred the characteristics of pupils fearing the teacher, and being passive and culturally dependent.

Areeya is more directive, stimulating and intrusive in her interactive style. She did not believe in a minimal language on the basis that if she repeatedly talks daily to pupils, pupils will finally be able to talk. She believed strongly that students could understand what she communicated and therefore chose to use language in the level that she considered age appropriate for her pupils.

This may affect her ability to respond contingently to her pupil's exploration. For instance, a young boy with severe autism had often punched himself so hard on his chin and forehead that he cried. After Intensive Interaction sessions, he did it in a happy and more fun way and tried to invite Areeya to copy his acting, but she refused and demanded he stop doing it:

“I am feeling if we follow their lead letting them think and play following their own preference. Sometimes, we do not know what way the children imagine in their play. We are sometimes afraid that we have different thoughts and cannot tune in accordingly with the children....Now I do not imitate Art anymore. When he did it I asked him to stop and told him that it was not a good thing to do. If we imitate him he will think it is good. We have to tell him directly what good or bad is”. (Areeya)

Areeya was afraid of the different thought between her and pupils. She was worried about allowing pupils to explore in their play. For example, if she imitated repetitive behaviour, the pupil would do this more. She had a strong belief that pupils would develop their learning if they stopped such repetitive behaviour. After our discussion, she still showed her unwillingness to respond to the pupil exploring his own way of learning. Areeya is a clear example showing the Thai culture of collectivism and high uncertainty avoidance. She cannot accept that pupils can have agency in their learning and is against the notion of constructing knowledge from the pupil's exploration. In her beliefs, the teacher is the only source of knowledge and has to directly and explicitly transmit to the pupils what 'good or bad' is. In my observation, Areeya also referred to a limitation of good Karma in the pupil's previous life when the pupil could not develop his learning as she expected.

### **A Fluctuating Feeling**

For Jutima, her implementing process was in a state of flux. Her understanding of Intensive Interaction was often shifting, although she acknowledged that learning through interactive play was desirable for pupils and she was happy to see the effectiveness of Intensive Interaction from her teaching sessions. After teaching sessions, Jutima expressed surprise in the pleasing outcome which she had not expected. She articulated her increased belief and motivation to use Intensive Interaction with other pupils:



“I’m very amazed at how it works. At first, I’m quite against a little in my mind but I do as you suggest. When he made sounds I responded, when he was playing with his hand I played the same. One day whilst we were playing with our hands (we each played with our hand), he grabbed my hand and put it in his hand like he was trying to make it into a lump and he smiled. In that day I was amazed with its good outcome. It’s fun and effective. He is normally absent-minded, inattentive, and does not look at anyone, or smile. He walked all the time... I never saw him do this before. So I was amazed and believed a lot more and want to do it with other children too”. (Jutima)

When asked about her feelings during Intensive Interaction implementation, Jutima expressed her feeling of freedom in teaching and learning. She stated:

“Normally I like the new thing. What I like in Intensive Interaction is that it gives a freedom both to myself and children. Earlier we have to plan small objectives in advance which made me stressed. I always gave myself pressure to achieve the pre-planned objectives. But doing Intensive Interaction, we do not need to divide a big goal into small objectives, so I don’t feel pressured”. (Jutima)

In that moment, Jutima identified with Intensive Interaction, but in the next she shifted and felt frustrated:

“I don’t see the clear steps of what I should do. Normally, the Thai teaching system would require objectives and end targets. There were fixed steps for you to follow from 1, 2, 3, 4...We would like a clear path from start to finish. We are sometimes worried and don’t know what to do exactly. We’ve got loads of questions during doing it. Have we finished the first stage of yours [Intensive

Interaction]? What we're doing is right? What should we do next?"  
(Jutima)

The feeling of being in implicit teaching, which is not a traditional Thai linear structure, is very challenging for Jutima. Jutima, who worked heavily on the production of speech, expressed the most difficulty in being in a non-outcome focused session where she neither included objectives for the pupil nor knew in advance the learning direction within the teaching session. She therefore felt unclear in the process of teaching and did not see the clear steps of direction. She tended to retain the pre-planned-based teaching in her mind and showed frustration when the session was an objective-free activity, where she could not to make her pre-planned objectives happen. Finally, she sometimes felt unsuccessful in her teaching. Jutima sometimes demanded the linear step of teaching that she called a 'special teaching technique'.

It seemed that the positive outcome of Intensive Interaction surprised Jutima in a period of the development of social ability which could be rapidly observed. In this period, Jutima smoothly responded to child-led activities. The implementation fluctuated in the process of development of language ability and when the period of repeated activities where 'there is nothing new' happening.

Jutima also raised process teaching in Intensive Interaction as an issue. She perceived that process learning, based on the learner's pace and direction, were so slow and broad than she felt challenged. She felt that such repetitive activities lasted so long that her motivation somewhat faded. It seemed she lost the teaching direction whilst being in the implicit teaching process. Jutima tended to focus on objective-outcome teaching and this had an impact on her patience to teach in a session that focuses on quality of process, not objectives. Without orderly pre-planned activity, Jutima still sometimes felt stressed and was not confident in what she was doing when the teaching process could not rush to make a measurable outcome. Whilst

feelings of uncertainty in the objective-free session showed, she repeatedly articulated her satisfied outcome with Intensive Interaction, and so fluctuated between confidence in Intensive Interaction and frustration:

“Sometimes, it’s difficult [the process] because it’s wide so that I was not certain what to do... I feel it’s [process] so slow... I’m very much clinging to the system of controlling of speech. In Intensive Interaction session, I have to be coolheaded, patient and respond to the process of the child’s pace. The point is it takes time and I have to wait. I really like the outcome of Intensive Interaction and see its merit, but dislike its slow process. I lack confidence to teach when the session is objective-free. I sometimes felt fun that I was able to play with the child but sometimes felt stressed to follow the child-led play”. (Jutima)

Compared to Areeya, this struggle did not influence Jutima’s ability to carry out responsive play. Whilst Areeya felt it was difficult to respond with trial and error in child-led activities, Jutima showed her ability to flexibly respond to child-led play. Apart from preferring explicit objective teaching, it seems that Jutima’s attitude to play influenced her perception of Intensive Interaction implementation. As previously discussed, Jutima had a negative attitude towards child-led play and thus distrusted teaching through play. She often questioned why children have to play. For example, although she used to instinctively play flip-flop hand with a pupil with autism and SLD, she felt stressed and guilty.

Previously, Jutima used objective approaches to teach only pre-academic subjects and speech production, and never considered fundamental communication skills as an important aspect for children’s life. Also, she mentioned that she had never been successful in teaching a pupil with autism and SLD communication skills in her previous work experience. In this case Jutima shows long-term orientated culture that focuses heavily on

the next stage of education of pupils and often overlooks the priority that pupils need in real life:

“We kept playing with them and it only felt like playing around. It feels like we didn’t have any objectives at all, only this point. There should have at least been a target we set in our minds which we normally made it more academic, not social abilities. We got stuck a bit with the questions why not this way, why that way. Sometimes we took our time repeating the activities and kept reminding ourselves we were following the process so calm down. Because I have never taught these set of skills before, we never have”. (Jutima)

An uncertain feeling was also shown by Neelanoot. Her ‘uncertain moment’ came from the frustration to be unable to make predetermined objectives happen in child-led play and the concerns of child’s repeated play. In contrast to Jutima, Neelanoot had a positive attitude to play and she mentioned that she used to do something similar to Intensive Interaction. However, rather than teaching through play, Neelanoot applied play as a mechanism to capture the initial interest and make the pupils happy, and then would try and make them learn by structured objective teaching:

“Sometimes when we play with them, we may have a target in our minds. Anyway, in practice, there’re some obstacles that they have to play all the time. They won’t know when it’s enough. We intended to let them play so we let them keep on. But they can’t stop and what we think was: would they be able to improve in some other areas? I just wondered if it’d really work by not trying to get them out from there. They play the same thing over and over. We play along but they still keep playing the same games”. (Neelanoot)

Neelanoot and Jutima tended to hasten the desired objectives and thus they sometimes had quite limited patience to make the activity flow in accordance with the child's play. For them, repetitive activity was considered to lack an educational target:

"I was concerned [about playing along with the students] because it feels like we didn't have any objectives at all, only this point. One would only play with the same things all the time. The ones loved tapping will just keep tapping. Why couldn't they play with this or that so they could be developed in different skills?" (Jutima)

As each teaching approach is based on principles, teachers applied them in their own ways. In Thai culture, doing things in the same direction is the expectation of society, especially in the school context. The implementation of different teaching practice amongst teachers provoked a hidden disagreement amongst teachers who taught the same pupils. For example, the issue of using repetitive behaviour as the starting point to join in with pupils was viewed and implemented in two ways. Some believed that imitating repetitive behaviour would facilitate such behaviour more often and make it more difficult to terminate it. These teachers felt uncomfortable about responding to the repetitive behaviour of the pupils. Rather they waited until pupils stopped that behaviour, led the interactive game and then responded to the pupil:

"Lukhew likes rock her body. The way to connect with her is to rock with her. But I did not respond to such behaviour because I feel I have to remove that. She has done that rocking body since last semester. If she cannot stop this behaviour it is her problem. When I do Intensive Interaction, I waited until she finished rocking. And we played fingers-walk; tickled on her body and sang songs. She enjoyed with me and liked this play style. But if she made voices I would respond to her voices. She likes the light soft sound". (Benjaporn)

Benjaporn felt responding to repetitive activities caused more problems for the pupil, so instead she offered an interactive game and then tried to respond to the pupil. However, Benjaporn was willing to respond to the sound that the pupil made.

Some teachers, like Daleeka and Malisa, believed they could finally reduce the pupil's repetitive behaviour after a good relationship was established. These teachers adopted such repetitive behaviours as a starting point to joining in with their pupils:

“For me, if Lukhew still likes to rock her body I would play with her until she is satisfied. Sometimes I offer her toys such as blowing bubbles or some new games similar to rocking. But if she still wants to play the same game, we can play that game again together. I wouldn't mind. I think if she plays until satisfied she will move to other play by herself. Or if Lukhew and me have a good relationship I could gradually reduce her rocking body. I believe we can do it”. (Daleeka)

Daleeka tried to adapt herself to participate in such repetitive behaviours by offering new things that she had prepared in advance (e.g. new games or toys) to the pupils. She commented that newly prepared materials and games could increase the fun and maintain motivation in the interaction.

## **Improvement and Change of Teachers' Teaching Practice**

The positive changes of pupils affected the teachers' teaching practice. The teachers described interaction experience that has changed their perceptions

of teaching practices and their personalities. These included beginning to acknowledge the importance of play and responsiveness teaching. Prior to adopting Intensive Interaction, the majority of teachers maintained that they often played with their pupils. The degree of play, however, varied according to the teacher's characteristics, which meant play would often happen only for some teachers who personally liked to play with pupils. Play is perceived to be only fun, which is less important and should only occur when they finish their learning process. As mentioned previously, in the Thai classroom culture, play between teachers and pupils occurred rather less as the attitude was that play may reduce fear in pupils and may lead to a loss of respect for teachers. The former play style was often described as teacher-led play. In this play style, teachers described that they would choose when to start and finish play, the type of play and the duration of play. The former play style is congruent with Thai traditional teaching, a teacher-controlled approach with a step-by-step sequence.

Benjaporn described her changes in play characteristics when compared with previous play and interactive play. After Intensive Interaction she changed from teacher-directed play toward responsive play. She increased the use of pauses and responding to the children. These improved abilities facilitated her to play in the right rhythm with her pupils. As a result, social engagement and the time of play were expanded as the pupils understood the game that they were playing:

It [play style] changes. Now I wait for the child to respond. Previously, I did not wait. We played in our pace and rhythm, not hers. We did not emphasise the child's response and initiation. Now I play and wait for her response. She would give her hand for me to play giggle and fingers walk again. I know play's rhythm now, so we can play in extended time because we understand the game we are playing and know what types of game we can play together". (Benjaporn)

Daleeka spent more time playing with pupils, adapting her body position and play styles to the pupils, which was full of teasing, fun, and relaxation with themselves and pupils. She stated:

“Now I play much more with the kids. In the past I often played but it was not fun like Intensive Interaction. It was a play which was up to us. We played what we wanted and when we wanted too. When we wanted to play we approached the children and played without regarding what they were doing. And we would stop when we wanted it too. I’m now feeling fun with playing and feel a lot more playful. Now I like pretending to trick the kids. The kids started to learn my playful style and have fun with me”. (Daleeka)

Before Intensive Interaction, in teacher-led play, almost all the teachers were unable to play with pupils described as having SLD and severe autism, and who did not know how to play or did not want to play. Teachers were not certain of what they should do with these pupils. As a result, pupils with autism and SLD would withdraw and move away from the teachers. In the Thai classroom pupils with autism and SLD were mixed with other pupils with SEN with a variety of ages and with greatly different learning speeds. The ratio of teacher to pupils on average is 1:12 in a special school and 1:20 in special classes in regular school. In general, the teachers had less awareness of individual differences among pupils with SEN and thus they always used the same type of play with all pupils. Benjaporn described using a ball to play with her pupils, including a pupil with SLD and autism:

“Earlier, if I wanted to play ball, I just started throwing the ball. But Lookkaew [a pupil with SLD and autism] would always stay still not knowing how to play. Sometimes, I bounce a ball near her and called her name softly to invite her to play. If she didn’t respond or gave me any sign, we didn’t know what next to do. We did not know how to encourage Lookkaew to play [a ball] as she



still didn't know how to and so she just decided to back off and was far away". (Benjaporn)

After Intensive Interaction was adopted, Benjaporn demonstrated:

"Now I can play with Lookkaew. I know how to play games that she likes. Previously, we did not play like this [Intensive Interaction]. I often used a ball to play with the kids...Now I play tickle game, sing song and hug her. It's like the wall between us was destroyed. She is grown up [13 years old] but she likes to sit on my lap, looking at my face while I put my arm around her, sing a song and play figure walk on her body". (Benjaporn)

Benjaporn described changing the use of a ball toy for playing with the pupil with SLD and autism into a simple interactive game. This change helped Benjaporn be able to play with the pupil whom previously she could not play with.

Teachers described their feelings of adjusting themselves and opening their mind, resulting from Intensive Interaction implementation. In Thai hierarchical classrooms, teachers normally demand the pupils to come to their place, rather than approach pupils in their places. After Intensive Interaction, Lalita, who used to remain in the teacher's place with high authority and control, described adjusting herself toward the pupils' place and preferences to meet with a pupil's communicative ability:

"We're now OK, no more feelings we had when we started. I think Intensive Interaction helps us adapt ourselves. It's like it opens up the teacher. It's not only open up the child but also us. Earlier, we invite or demand the child to come to our place and made her do the activity and speech training as we set. But now we move to her place, her way and let her lead us. After constantly playing with her that day, she walked and held my hand. She said, 'po ka po ka po', and tried to make sounds. So I opened up more of my

mind and think of what you told me that her development was similar to a one-year baby. So I just think about meeting half way because it's easier to get along and communicate". (Lalita)

Previously, Lalita treated and communicated with pupils according to their ages. Intensive Interaction makes her recognise the pupils' actual communicative abilities and this makes her communicate with pupils on their own level. While she stated that "what we do (using baby language) is opposite to what we see (teenage girl)", the positive outcome of Intensive Interaction opened up her mind. She then revealed she was more open to this teaching method because the pupil approached her and made new sounds. In that moment, Lalita agreed to continue the teaching principle suitable for the pupil's developments, rather than their calendar age or size.

Some teachers, like Chareeka, commented that she had a clear sense of what she was doing in the new learning process. In the past, she described that she did something similar to Intensive Interaction but did not understand its purpose and meaning. Knowing Intensive Interaction clarified the play style that she used to employ previously. Chareeka further explained that she has developed a variety of responses to pupils' communication and has the ability to use it flowingly and confidently:

"Now we have the mood to play because we know the goal and know what we are doing. Earlier we have done like this, but we did not know what it was, we could not interpret it. Now we know the kid give us much response. Back then the kids already respond to us but we did not respond to them. For example, earlier Plam made a voice and we did it back. She turned her neck to the left and the right and looked at me, but we did not expand our interaction from that. We stopped it, but now from that we know how to respond to her, we know many ways to expand our interaction". (Chareeka)

Every teacher emphasised that their observational skills had been improved and this led to increased abilities of assessing pupils' signals, using pauses and waiting for a pupil's responses. A greater awareness of individual difference amongst pupils with SEN was also mentioned:

"Earlier, I did not quite observe the kids, everything depended on me. But now I really observe the kids a lot more. With B, I would find a good time to approach her, what kind of 'play' that she may like. We have to observe the individual differences and game that each child likes and enjoys. Previously, we played a game that we often chose with the kinds who knew how to play, and did not play with the kids who did not know how to play or did not want to play".  
(Daleeka)

The calmness and flexibility towards pupils was emphasised by teachers. They felt positive about pupils and more understanding towards them. It is interesting to note that they also felt positive about the pupils' stereotyped behaviour, which was previously considered as inappropriate and in need of reduction or removal. The positive feeling about pupils' stereotyped behaviour may be as a result of the teachers using these behaviours as a part of the starting point to connect with the pupils. Malisa reported that she did not demand pupils to stop such stereotyped behaviour and did not feel annoyed with their behaviours as she did before:

"Doing Intensive Interaction is as if we enter into the child's world. It is as if we understand what the child wants to tell us what she wants. Now I feel more flexible to the children, feel very calm. Earlier, when she played with her hands, I would scold her and her classmates would do the same because they copied me so she felt alienated. Now I don't scold anymore. I let her do what

she feels happy and comfortable with. Now I feel more at ease and relaxed with the children". (Malisa)

Malisa expressed her feeling of ease and relaxation towards the pupils' stereotyped behaviour. Earlier, she used to order pupils to stop such behaviour in a strong manner, which meant the pupil's classmates did the same action to her. This caused the pupil to feel alienated and isolated from the peer group. The change of Malisa's thinking and action caused the classmates to not scold the pupil's stereotyped behaviour and this facilitated a positive classroom environment.

Some teachers mentioned the change of their feelings to learning from the pupils, or sharing the learning between them. The child-led principle of Intensive Interaction gives power to pupils to control their own activity in social interaction. It promoted a sense of shared learning between pupils and teachers and this was perceived as a good thing for the teacher as well. It seemed this feeling reduced the strong teacher-led approach and facilitated the teachers' understanding and empathy to pupils:

"Intensive Interaction is good both for the kids and the teacher. It is not the approach that we are only pulling the kids to learn from the teacher, but it is our willingness to learn from the kids as well. It is shared learning between us and it's like we learn from each other". (Daleeka)

The increased use of physical contact was widely mentioned by all teachers. Touch was described as the most powerful tool to connect to the pupils. Previously, teachers used less physical contact, such as touching, hugging, and kissing their pupils. They sometimes used physical closeness with only their favourite pupils. Some teachers considered physical contact as 'indulgence' of the child. As discussed, culturally, teachers kept their distance to make pupils look up to them. Obedience and respect to teachers were deemed to be reduced if pupils got too close to the teachers. As a collectivist

culture, Thai teachers normally treat all pupils as a group, rather than individuals. Using physical closeness with particular pupils is considered as showing bias. Also, with a high number of pupils in class, some teachers, like Areeya, used less physical contact with pupils:

“Back then, we rarely hugged the kids because we got loads of them. If we hugged a kid others would feel... like why you didn’t hug me too”. (Areeya)

Some teachers were afraid of being attacked, such as biting and pinching, by pupils and thus used compliments or food as rewards to pupils. For example, Puntipa said she hardly had physical contact with pupils because of fear of being attacked:

“Previously, we hardly used physical contact [proximity] to the child. I was afraid of being pinched. But now I know he likes it and it make me feel good. Earlier, we did not know that he liked it. We did not recognise that touch, hugging or closeness is important for him or these make him trust us more”. (Puntipa)

After Intensive Interaction, Puntipa demonstrated she knew that the pupils liked touch and closeness. She now recognised the importance of physical contact to build trust from the pupils to her.

Interactive games without toys and sing songs were much more widely employed. Earlier these interactive games hardly occurred before adopting Intensive Interaction. Normally, teachers often used academic toys to play with pupils:

“Now we sing simple songs. Previously, we never sang a song. And now we play Thai interactive game that uses only me and the

kid such as a spider game and a singing bird game. It is different from the past that we had to find toys as a connection for playing. We used to think that play must went along with toys. But now, even though we sometimes still offer toy to the kids but we will try to use interactive play without toy with them first". (Jutima)

Almost all the teachers said that they felt inspired to use Intensive Interaction with other pupils. The pupils' positive outcomes that the teachers observed inspired their desires to use Intensive Interaction with other pupils in the future:

"I feel inspired to do Intensive Interaction with other children because earlier I loved to play but could not play with the children with severe learning disability. But when I do this method we can play with those kids. I feel confident to use it with other children as we already got good outcomes from many children". (Chareeka)

Due to its positive outcome, Chareeka expressed her confidence to employ Intensive Interaction with other pupils in the future. She further acknowledged that for some pupils it may take time and may gain less response. However, she believed that it will finally bring a good result.

## **Theme Two: Encouraging Factors to Intensive Interaction**

This theme refers to what encouraged and motivated Thai teachers to continue doing Intensive Interaction. This section includes the positive aspects of teachers' experience with the use of Intensive Interaction. This theme consists of seven sub-themes: starting from a sceptical mind, rewarded trust from the pupils, the development of communicative abilities,

reduced stereotyped behaviour, generalisation, the 'versatility' of the natural model, and motivation from caregivers.

### **Starting from a Sceptical Mind**

Prior to discussing the details of the factors encouraging the use of Intensive Interaction, it is worth mentioning the initial scepticism in some teachers' minds before implementing and in the early stages of the use of Intensive Interaction. At first, some teachers were not attracted to the principles of Intensive Interaction. They did not believe that it would work effectively or make a difference to their interactions with the pupils. Dareeka often mentioned play between her and her pupils before adopting Intensive Interaction. It seemed she assumed that the traditional play that she usually employed was not much different from the responsive play of Intensive Interaction, and therefore it was not likely to bring significantly positive changes to pupils. However, Dareeka had some faith in the model of mother-infant interaction as it is the way that they develop their children. After she practised this different system of play, its possibilities were revealed. The positive effect of Intensive Interaction was, therefore, as Dareeka stated, unexpected:

"My feeling changed in a positive way, it's really good. At first I thought it would not work. It might be getting some good results, but not much. I believed only half of it. But, on the other hand, I think it is how our parents raise us, so it had to be a part in helping children develop themselves. So I have tried and it turns out otherwise. It didn't help children only a half, but a lot better".  
(Dareeka)

Jutima was even opposed to the Intensive Interaction principle at the beginning stage. She articulated:

“I’m quite amazed at the successful outcome of it [Intensive Interaction]. In the very early stage, I was a little bit in an opposite side because it was ‘only play’. Was that all? Just played along children, imitated them and let them lead play. In fact, it must have something more than this. But after doing it for a while, I’ve seen a child changed, he is happy and more social. So I was amazed and believed a lot more and want to do it with others children too”.

(Jutima)

Jutima thought Intensive Interaction was ‘only play’, and questioned its role in children’s learning. Responsive play, for her, was deemed as ‘too simple’ and even a waste of time. She thought it should have something effective, more than simple play. Jutima wanted to seek ‘special teaching techniques’ rather than responding to fun play led by a pupil. When she saw the outcome of Intensive Interaction, it surprised her.

### **Positive Responses from the Pupils**

The pupils’ positive responses to Intensive Interaction were the most important factor that encouraged the teachers to continue its use. Intensive Interaction was articulated as fostering the teachers ‘assessing’ into the child’s personal world and, from that, it built a good relationship between the pupil-teacher pair. The positive response included increased physical proximity and touch, increasing sustained eye-contact, reaching out, enjoyment, and increased ability to initiate interaction and vocalisation. Both the positive changes and progress of pupils’ social-communication abilities were highlighted by all teachers.



### *Rewarded Trust from the Pupils*

Intensive Interaction was described as the way the teachers were showing acceptance in pupils to encourage them to be proud of themselves. This was illustrated by Neelanoot:

“I guess he was proud of himself because he felt accepted. There is a teacher to play with him. He may not feel he is a leader at that time because he is too young. It may be more like there was somebody who accepted what he was doing. So he got a big smile on his face and looked happy when we used Intensive Interaction”. (Neelanoot)

Neelanoot emphasised that Intensive Interaction makes children feel good about and proud of themselves, as teachers can play along with them. She described that interactive play with the children was accepted by them, which made them happy and increased their confidence. Dareeka described the differences of pupils' behaviours before and after Intensive Interaction:

“There're some total differences. Firstly, they used to be introverted, hiding themselves in their own world. Even when teachers offered to be with them, they still denied, but playing in this teaching system can considerably change them. Now, the pupils have more courage to get close to me and communicate [physically], play around and reveal about themselves”. (Dareeka)

Dareeka described interactive play as increasing the pupils' courage and confidence to approach their teachers. Before Intensive Interaction, she described her pupils as inattentive to anyone. They detached themselves from others, remained in their own place and also refused to come close to teachers. After Intensive Interaction sessions, Dareeka described the pupils as showing courage, happiness, cheerfulness and greater closeness to her. She described this as if pupils were opening themselves up to her.

Benjaporn highlighted a good relationship that was built up between her with a remote pupil who had a minimum toleration to share social proximity:

“When we can play with him, it’s like he knows me better and I know him better. It’s like he opens up his mind to me. He trusts me enough to approach me so we can get closer to each other. He can hold my hand now, earlier he never could do this or came near anyone. If anybody walked closer to his territory, he would immediately walk away”. (Benjaporn)

Here, Benjaporn articulated the result of intensive Interaction as building up a good relationship, which was described as ‘trust’. It helped her and the pupil know each other better. She described the pupil as opening up his mind to her and trusting in her. After trust was established Benjaporn observed new behaviours, which never were seen before, such as closeness and touching the teacher. In a similar account, Sivaluck reported the development of the pupil’s awareness of the social environment and initiation. He excitedly described when he was able to initiate physical play activities that the pupil had never done before:

“Wan (a 12-year-old boy with autism and SLD) barely responded or reacted to others. He never really cared to interact with anyone but now he walks to me and pokes me. He didn’t do it at all earlier but now he pokes my waist or my legs and I poke him back, to play with him. He’s just started a behaviour of play invitation. I was surprised at the first time because he had never done it”. (Sivaluck)

The desire to share pupils’ interests and belongings was another example of observed new behaviour. Dareeka illustrated an expression of trust and friendship with her pupil by showing his belonging to her, which he had never done before:

“They trust me to be part of their life. For instance, Tete (a 12-year-old boy with autism and SLD) used to hide his belongings in his school bag, and never let anyone see it. Now, he lets me see his belongings and shows things to me. Last Thursday, we were cooking, and he brought eggs to school and showed them to me. It’s quite surprised me”. (Dareeka)

Teachers mentioned the increased willingness of pupils to participate in classroom activities at a faster pace. They also noticed that pupils had a better understanding of what the teachers had communicated, and they responded faster to teachers’ requests and input:

“Being with us, he thinks he can trust us. After that, it’s like we can talk, we can tell. He believes me more. It is that. When I tell him to do something, he will understand it and do it faster”. (Benjaporn)

The positive responses were not only noted during Intensive Interaction sessions, but also during the rest of the pupil’s day at school, and at home as well. Moreover, some students showed greater willingness to come to school than earlier:

“Intensive Interaction also helps the kids happy during the day, not only in the session. It [Intensive Interaction] brings a good mood and happiness to the kids for doing other activities that we have arranged for them”. (Daleeka)

The trust of pupils led to an increase in the teachers’ ability or confidence to manage pupils both in teaching activities and their daily routine. This aspect was praised by almost all teachers and was a motivating factor for continuing with Intensive Interaction:

“Since our relationship is very much improved, children trust me more. As a result, she accepts what we taught her more. I feel very comfortable”. (Malisa)

### *The Progresses of Communicative Abilities*

Teachers reported improved communication skills among their pupils. The degree of communicative abilities varied from being pre-verbal to using words. All teachers agreed that the pupils’ use of body language communication emerged. They stated that pre-speech pupils began using body language and facial expressions to communicate their needs with them. Pupils showed better signs of ‘telling and asking’ for their needs through body language and facial expressions and this helped teachers to develop more understanding of the pupils’ needs.

“Faem now has the courage to walk and ‘tell’ [physical communication] me. He is now brave enough to hold my hand and ‘tell’ what he needs. Previously, he used to be someone at the corner, and never would approach anyone. Whether he was satisfied or dissatisfied he would stay away from everyone. When he was pleased, he laughed alone. When he was upset, he cried alone too... Earlier when he wanted to leave the room, he would walk around the room again and again, jump, stamp his feet on the floor, and cry at his corner. But now he has the courage to hold my hand and look at me. It’s like he is telling me that ‘I want to leave the room’”. (Benjaporn)

Dareeka described the new social behaviours of ‘asking’ a teacher’s permission to play with toys through body language and facial expressions. She also compared Lookkaew with another pupil with autism and SLD who she did not use Intensive Interaction with:

“Lookkaew uses more gesture to express her needs. Now, if she wants to come to this room [play room] she will walk to me and

hold my hand. She will look at us and smile like she is persuading us to go to this room. When she wants a toy, she will walk to it and then turn her face to look at us like she is asking us 'can I play with this toy?' She has made good progress, I think. But Nonny, will grab everything she want and never ask us first". (Dareeka)

Many teachers observed that some pupils started making sounds and enjoyed playing with sounds:

"Now, Art is producing many sounds, like Na Ne. He can make lots of noises, even though it is not yet a word". (Jutima)

Chaleeta reported a 6-year old boy with autism and SLD who was able to only say 'no' and 'don't' earlier, but could now make very different sounds. She described the pupil as being not irritated by her and as playing or experimenting with new sounds:

"Before using Intensive Interaction, Bon would say 'Don't', 'No', when I came to him. He would only say those words when he was irritated and didn't want me to get close to him. But after Intensive Interaction, he will make other sounds. It's like he is not annoyed, like he is trying to play with sounds. It has happened many times". (Chaleeta)

Malisa mentioned her pupil as having progress in speech production. She described this good outcome as 'a bonus' from working with Intensive Interaction principles. A 13-year-old girl in a special class in regular school was described as having autism and SLD, and often self-injured. The teacher employed Intensive Interaction sessions with this pupil and also trained some pupils in her class, who had good skills, to use it with the girl. Intensive Interaction also was applied in group plays with a musical tool and these

were reported as leading to a great improvement in the pupil's language ability:

“The important success is language, which is a huge bonus from my investment, as Bo can speak now. Firstly, she was trained to speak since year one—(by sitting in front of the mirror and getting the pupils to imitate how we pronounced and talked), but she did not speak, not at all. I was very stressed with her at that time. She began to say words when she was year two. The first word was ‘no’ ‘no’. But when we used Intensive Interaction [both by teacher and student's friends], she can speak many words. I nearly got tear of happiness as I previously trained her for a long time but failed”. (Malisa)

The positive outcome of Intensive Interaction was judged as a ‘gift’ that they received from that kind of working. All teachers commented that they had not known a teaching method to promote social engagement before and had never focused mainly on teaching social communication ability with mutual pleasure. The trust and enjoyment of Intensive Interaction promoted the social-communication abilities and made other facets of learning easier for pupils:

“Intensive Interaction is like a gift, another piece of gift to help us with teaching. Earlier, there was completely no method to teach students using only interactions like this one, not at all, not even anything to make them laugh happily. We have never come to this point. When we have used this method I feel children and teacher have a good relationship. Children trust the teacher and then the teacher would connect it into language and communicative teaching where we keep doing it with fun. It helps us to reach the aims faster and teach other thing easier. So I say it is a gift for me”. (Malisa)

### *Reduced Stereotyped Behaviour*

Another positive outcome of Intensive Interaction was a reduction in stereotyped behaviour. Although Intensive Interaction was not introduced to reduce stereotyped behaviour, Dareeka, who was studying on a master's programme and was very eager and curious about Intensive Interaction, tried to use it for this purpose. Her targeted pupil was an 18 year old boy with Autism and SLD, who often put his index finger and thumb into his mouth to pull out saliva in order to happily look at it. He enjoyed repeatedly playing with it. The teacher started by massaging his hand and developed this into an easy interactive game with him. Previously, when wanting him to stop playing in this way, she often asked him immediately to stop doing it. He exploded in anger and yelled out at his classmates around him and sometimes made offensive sounds to the teacher as a result of her prohibition. After Intensive Interaction sessions, he could break from playing with saliva and gradually allowed her more time for massaging. The reduction in his testy, vicious and self-injurious behaviour was reported from the teacher:

“Sambe loves playing with saliva. I want him to reduce that behaviour for some 2-3 minutes. I sat beside him and asked him a few minutes for playing hand massage with him. And then I massaged his hand and gave his hand back to him. At very first time, he would make sounds like he was annoyed and did not give me his hand. So I just sat beside him ...and sometimes I asked him ‘enjoy, don’t you’? He didn’t answer and still was playing with that, but turned his face to me. I approached him a bit a day... He now allows me to massage his hand for a longer time. He likes it now and can reduce the playing of saliva as well. After that he allows me to play easy games with his hands. He is happy with me”. (Dareeka)

### *Generalisation*

One of the most surprising aspects teachers felt happened as a result of Intensive Interaction is that the students' social abilities occurred without prompts from the teachers. The main focus of social skills that the teachers in this study have been training are for the pupils to look at a person's face and focus on the person's eyes that they are dealing with. Previously, these abilities were taught through academic toys, and teachers mentioned that pupils could not transfer behaviours learnt in this way to outside of the training room. That meant pupils could do these abilities naturally in a real situation outside the training room and needed the teachers' reminders at all times. Similarly, both teachers and parents reported that pupils' communication skills learnt in the training room were not transferred to different situations. When using Intensive Interaction, teachers surprisingly reported that pupils were using social skills naturally:

"She has social skills without teaching with coercion. I don't need to tell her 'look at the face and focus on the eyes' to person you are communicating to. Because she has a fun time with me and so she went to look at another teacher's face, made eye contact and smiled at them in order to persuade those people to play with her. I never thought I could do this". (Dareeka)

Sivaluck excitedly described positive changes in pupils with autism and SLD:

"He used to walk motionlessly and inertly, and never cared about anyone around. But now he starts to walk to and touch some other people, wander around to pick up stuff, pick up and put down his things loudly...That day we walked and put our arms around each other's shoulders, then he jabbed me. So I tried Intensive Interaction like you taught [jabbed him back]. It worked. We did it". (Sivaluck)

The children's trust in the teacher also had positive effects on other people. Almost all teachers mentioned that many pupils began to be interested in



and more sensitive to others around them. Teachers felt that pupils allowed themselves to connect to and respond more quickly to others:

“She doesn’t trust only me, but also tries to approach others as well. I think she is sensitive to the feelings of those around her and responds to them faster too. I did not think she was able to invite others to play with her. But she walked to them, looked at them with smile and invited them to play a game like I played with her. I never expected that she could do it, never thought really. I took her in that room in order to see if there was any teacher she could play with. I saw she play with Areeya. It is ok. But playing happily with everyone, u05, u06, you and another two training teachers quite makes me surprised”. (Dareeka)

Many teachers stated that they never thought a pupil with autism and SLD, like Film, could invite others to play with them as he never had allowed anyone close to them:

“I never thought a student like Film could be in a queue waiting to play with other teachers. He is always far away from us, and never allowed anyone near him. I hardly play with him in the front, only on his back. If he sees my face on, he will withdraw. The day he was queuing after his friends and waiting for Areeya and Jutima to let him have a go with a new game. I could not believe my eyes. Normally, he never ever takes anyone. I didn’t think he can do this”. (Benjaporn)

## The Value of Naturalistic Approach

### The Human Nature

The naturalistic approach underpinning Intensive Interaction has helped teachers in this study feel able to adopt Intensive Interaction as a new teaching approach. The framework of Intensive Interaction is based on mother-infant interaction theory. Some elements are natural instincts in all humans, although these may be modified by culture (as discussed in the concept of culture, p.54-55). When developed as a teaching approach, its key principles and elements were described as a simple method of teaching:

“Intensive Interaction is a simple method of teaching but we just did not notice it. We never considered it is a matter of teaching. When we have known it, it isn’t difficult. What I like is that we play with kids with the purpose of teaching. It is a system of play that brings in good responses”. (Chaleeta)

Here, Chaleeta suggested that Intensive Interaction is a simple teaching method which was previously unfamiliar to her. Before, she mentioned responding to pupils’ activities in a similar manner to Intensive Interaction, but she did not know that it can be a way of teaching. When it became known to Chaleeta, she confirmed that Intensive Interaction was not a difficult teaching method. Teachers of young pupils, like Chaleeta, maintained that they had previously done some play activities with similar characteristics of Intensive Interaction before knowing that it was named in this way (Intensive Interaction):

“Previously, Bon loved playing with a toy car and I liked to join him during that time because while he played, he would make sounds like Ah Ah Ah... I then imitated his sounds and played along with him. When I looked back in that scenario and think, that is

Intensive Interaction, isn't it? I think it is... At that time, he was completely silent and looked at my face. And then he made sounds again and then I imitated again and he did it again. It was like automatic play where I was not conscious about it. It was just he played and we played back. And it worked during that time as Bon made a louder sound pleasantly. We never knew it can be a teaching method, a good one". (Chaleeta)

Chaleeta described her experiences of play as she had done earlier, for example imitations of pupils' sounds and faces. This was her automatic response during free play time with the pupils, without a desire to connect it to or promote pupils' social and communication ability. The analysis from observation also suggested that teachers who were keen to apply Intensive Interaction were those who loved to play with children, and had previously invented play activities similar to Intensive Interaction and appreciated its enjoyment. Sivaluck recounted a similar perception:

"I feel Intensive Interaction already resides in everyone. Depending on whether or not we use what we have with a purpose. Back then, we used to do some play activities like this, but we did not know what it was. Now we know it is Intensive Interaction". (Sivaluck)

Sivaluck described Intensive Interaction as what teachers already did. He implied that it was human nature or an 'intuition tool', which resided in everyone. Intensive Interaction was articulated as an adaptation and application of the intuition tool into the structure of a new pedagogy. Like Chaleeta, Sivaluck also perceived his playing in the past as similar to Intensive Interaction, but he did not recognise what it was and the purpose that he wanted from it. So, when he adopted Intensive Interaction, it seemed that he had a clear sense of what he did previously.

Child-led activity was easily adopted for teachers of young children who have taught in a one-to-one teaching session in their workplace. In this workplace, the teachers did not prepare a lesson for a whole class, and were not responsible for the daily routine of children. They thus seemed relaxed and had more opportunity to run interactive play with children. Moreover, the age of children ranging approximately from 2-6 years was seen as favourable to the use of interactive play. The teachers commented that they often played with pupils in a similar way to Intensive Interaction in order to make pupils feel familiar and have trust in them before starting a teaching session focused on muscle development. The positive previous experiences of 'following the child's lead' play fostered these teachers' comfort with Intensive Interaction implementation:

"Intensive Interaction is not difficult at all. Some of the activities we already did in the past, but they were in a shallow dimension. And we didn't know if there was anything to please children. After we adopted Intensive Interaction, we can expand activities and do something that more sophisticated". (Rattana)

Here, Rattana articulated that she did not feel any difficulty in doing Intensive Interaction because she already did some responsive play activities, but at a starting point and did not add sophistication to that play. Adopting Intensive Interaction helped her expand responsive play activities and know the way to enhance play in a more sophisticated method.

## **The Fun**

One motivation for adopting Intensive Interaction of the teachers in this study is the mutual pleasure and fun of Intensive Interaction, which was described as compatible with the teacher's nature. A fun-play style of Intensive Interaction was extensively commented on as a useful pedagogy that benefited both pupils and teachers. The element of mutual pleasure and fun, which is central to Intensive Interaction, is *sanuk*, which is also the key of

Thai culture (discussed in fun pleasure: 'sanuk', p. 84-85). Therefore the fun of Intensive Interaction delighted the teachers. As Malisa explained:

"I like it [Intensive Interaction] because it's fun. Maybe I have always loved to play with all these kids. I keep in mind that to approach the children, I have to be one of them. We are naturally their friends...So when this becomes a teaching technique, I feel this is what I'm always like". (Malisa)

Malisa described her feelings of having fun or *sanuk* in using Intensive Interaction because she always loved to play with children. She also told us that she normally was friendly with her pupils. Therefore, when *sanuk* became a teaching method, this made her very pleased. Daleeka talked about her feeling of relaxation in Intensive Interaction sessions:

"Intensive Interaction is a very relaxed approach of teaching for both teacher and children. It is flexible according to children and teachers. And it's fun. It's like we are playing at the same time. I like enjoyment and fun. This technique is quite like me. I mean this teaching method is well-matched with my nature". (Daleeka)

Daleeka emphasised the relaxation of Intensive Interaction as flexible for both pupils and teachers and this made her feel comfortable. Responsive play was not stressful as the pupil responded to the contrast to directive and controlled teaching, which Daleeka had criticised as forcing the child, which she did not like. She preferred relaxation and fun in Intensive Interaction as it corresponded with her nature.

## The 'Versatility'

Versatility was another aspect valued in utilising this approach and this was highlighted by all teachers. Intensive Interaction was considered as the application of existing capabilities in humans as tools for teaching, which did not require any special material:

“It isn’t difficult because we don’t need to burden ourselves with preparation. We can do Intensive Interaction if the student and teacher are ready. No need to prepare teaching materials. It doesn’t cause a burden”. (Areeya)

Areeya told us that there was no need to prepare any special material for an Intensive Interaction teaching session. Therefore, this meant that she did not feel it was difficult or caused a burden to implement Intensive Interaction. The teaching session can happen when teacher was available and the pupil was in a comfortable state. Puntipa provided another supportive aspect:

“We are now using Intensive Interaction with Nuu as well. He does not like to be in a classroom, so we have had to teach him in the place he likes. For me, it’s good that we can apply Intensive Interaction for many place and we do not need to carry academic toys with us like we used to in the past”. (Puntipa)

Puntipa focused on applying Intensive Interaction outside the classroom in many other places. Previously, she always carried academic toys, such as those for developing muscle strength or coordination between hand and eyes, as they provided a link to play and work with the child. Now she mentioned using interactive play without necessarily including academic toys.

## Motivation from Caregivers

Teachers said some caregivers, such as grandparents, parents and babysitters of pupils, were closer and more trusted as a result of the affection and trust that their children gave to teachers. Teachers said pupils' caregivers were happy and offered to collaborate with them. This gave teachers encouragement to continue to work with Intensive Interaction:

"I like Intensive Interaction as we are able to get more good interaction with children. When parents see we can get on and close with their grandchildren, they will trust us more as well. They will treat us as a person in their family". (Puntipa)

Puntipa did Intensive Interaction sessions while pupils' grandparents stayed with their children. Seeing Puntipa demonstrate warmth and love, and that she got on well with their grandchildren, made grandparents give more trust to her and treated her as a person in their family. Sivaluck, who lived in a dormitory of the special education centre, gave a similar story:

"I feel Wan's mum trust me more than earlier. After Wan and I had a good relationship, his mom often took him to me after finishing their supper. We played together in the football pitch and Wan and his mom helped me to water plants as well". (Sivaluck)

Sivaluck described the trust that the mothers of his pupils gave to him. This was after Sivaluck and his pupil had built up their relationship. A mother of pupils living in the house of the special education centre took one of her children to play with him after supper. She also offered to help Sivaluck water the plants.

A grandmother did not appreciate interactive play between teachers and her granddaughter. She thought her granddaughter should be seriously trained in self-help skills and speech, rather than having a fun play with her teacher. After Intensive Interaction sessions Dareeka reported:

“When her granddaughter is happy, grandma is happy too. From earlier grandmother asked ‘why did you have to play like this?’ But later grandma ask ‘what should we do next. She wants to know how she can help her granddaughter”. (Dareeka)

The increased social ability of her granddaughter and the happiness that clearly showed helped the grandmother develop a positive attitude to Intensive Interaction. Particularly, the increase of new behaviours such as the granddaughter’s use of gesture to express her needs to the teacher caught the grandmother’s attention. This made the grandmother ask Dareeka, “What should we do next?” as she would like to collaborate with the teacher in developing her granddaughter as well.

### **Theme Three: Perceived Barriers to Intensive Interaction in Thai schools**

This theme refers to the barriers that teachers perceived when they adopted Intensive Interaction in their teaching practices in the classroom. It included the inconsistency in teaching opportunities and suspicious looks from outsiders.

#### **Inconsistency in Teaching Opportunities**

##### *Staff-Pupil Ratio and Staff Shortage*

The one-to-one teaching approach of Intensive Interaction emerged as an issue when employed in a Thai special education classroom. There were generally twelve to twenty pupils per one teacher in a special class with or without support staff. Many teachers in this study identified a high ratio of pupils to teachers in their classes and staff shortages as the main restriction on the opportunities for them to frequently provide one-to-one teaching sessions with consenting pupils. The imbalance between the staff and pupils



was raised by many teachers as a significant barrier in the inconsistency of Intensive Interaction implementation:

“Here, we have a large number of pupils, but a small number of teachers. This semester we don’t have any teacher assistant, only a university teacher-student who comes to help in class some days. If any day she comes to care for the pupils, we can use Intensive Interaction well”. (Areeya)

Due to the staff shortages for handling the rest of the pupils in the class, many teachers often found it difficult to identify available time to implement Intensive Interaction under conditions where both a teacher and a pupil were ready; many used the classroom during lunch breaks, or outdoor activities, or during gap time after school and before the pupils were taken home. Although there were some teachers who could arrange one-to-one teaching sessions frequently with their pupils, overall the time to spend with the consenting pupils was shortened and inconsistent due to the need to consider other pupils in the class:

“There are very few teachers. The ratio of 15 students per 1 teacher and so I cannot leave the rest of the class. I sometimes took her here (the teacher’s room attached to classroom) during lunch break, but mostly after school time”. (Benjaporn)

“I keep playing with the consented pupils but not for long because there are twenty of them. And I have to take turn taking care of all of them”. (Malisa)

An issue of using Intensive Interaction in the classroom was that the one-to-one teaching with the consenting pupil was interrupted by other pupils. In the Thai special classroom, the ages of pupils range approximately from five to eighteen years old and the children have a mix of special needs, for example

intellectual disability, Down's Syndrome, autistic spectrum disorder and multiple learning difficulties. Combining significantly different learning-speed rates in a class made it harder for the teachers to manage routine activities and tailor the learning lessons to match each pupil. The teachers reported that while they were using Intensive Interaction with consenting pupils, the other pupils in the same class would also try to approach to the teacher:

“There are some obstacles because there are just too many kids. For example, when I was trying to play with a kid, the rest of them also wanted to join”. (Chaleeta)

Being interrupted was viewed as an obstacle in different degrees amongst teachers. Indeed, these perspectives were influenced by the various levels of social abilities of the pupils. Some teachers confirmed that this interruption exaggerated the situation where the consenting pupils themselves were easily isolated, deciding to walk away, and it was uncertain that they could regain the pupil's attention:

“Faem always backs off whenever some other kids join us. In fact, Faem isn't so keen to be close to anyone and that's why he always leaves when there're some other kids would like to play with me”. (Benjaporn)

“Since there are many types of special needs pupils in a classroom, while we intend to use the Intensive Interaction with a pupil, another pupil comes to play with me too. The pupil who we were using Intensive Interaction with walked away from us, while we were going to get along. In this case, this may be an obstacle... But sometime we can continue playing if I got some interesting toys he really likes” (Neelanoot).

The interruption was perceived as a minor issue or even as a positive effect for teachers who had pupils with more social ability. These teachers commented that such situations were not a big problem and could be managed. One teacher felt that they should find a best time for using Intensive Interaction within the classroom to avoid making the consenting pupils feel that they were isolated and treated differently from others. This teacher commented that, for her, group play had brought a positive effect:

“Absolutely not a problem when we sometimes play in a group (two pupils and one teacher). For example, I played with Art during the lunch break because he wasn’t sleepy. It was quite long before Dave came to join riding on my shoulders. Three of us were playing and sometimes Art looked at Dave’s face. For me, I think it’s good because Art looks at Dave and he’s OK to play too”. (Jutima)

### *Distracting Environment*

The classroom environment was another issue seen as distracting pupils’ attention from social engagement with teachers. In Thai school environments, every classroom is filled with a big number of pupils with mixed special needs. Each classroom is adjacent on the same floor. Inevitably, the building is sometimes filled with a variety of noises of both pupils and teachers. In addition, the upper floors of the building are used as classrooms for university students, causing the loud noise when each class was dismissed. Pupils were likely to disengage from their teachers because of the distracting environment. As a result, the time for using Intensive Interaction could be shorter than teachers intended:

“Here, it’s always loud – from their cries, laughs and lots more. It’s not like the kids will pay attention and are engaged with what we try to teach them [with Intensive Interaction]. There are too many disturbances around us. When they hear something, they’re

gone. There's too limited space of the place. It seems everywhere is full and occupied. This is why it's hard to manage". (Areeya)

### *Historical Framework of Didactic Activity Sets up Barriers to Engaging in Play*

Other parts of the teacher's role impeded the interaction between the pupil and the teacher. In two research sites, teachers cared for students from 07.00 to 15.00 and this extended to 17.00 after school time when the parents collected their children from school. Almost all teachers had to routinely teach self-help skills to pupils, such as dressing, eating and cleaning the body. These daily routines made some pupils angry with teachers and they would not be prepared to interact with them. Sometimes, the pressure between pupils and teachers rose when the teacher was required to do this to achieve the family's requirements and expectations of teaching self-help skills to their children. This often resulted in periods where the pupils refused to play with the teachers or even be approached by them:

"Now Lookkaew doesn't let me join her when she plays because I've forced her in many things, such as basic daily routines, eating or dressing herself. Since her family would like me to help with this, sometimes I have to make her eat or feed her. She obeys although she's not willing to. She'll back off from me. When I later approach her, it's not as fun, she doesn't enjoy it". (Benjaporn)

### *The Possibility of Creating Distance between a Teacher and Other Pupils*

Interactive play with certain pupils caused distance (estrangement, hurt) between teachers and others pupils in the class. Normally, according to the characteristic of Thai femininity, teachers treat pupils as a group and make them maintain harmony within the group. Pupils in Thai classrooms are taught to respect pupils who are older and call them Pe (sister or brother). Teachers avoid having close relationships and fun with particular pupils to avoid individualisation. Most teachers mentioned that they ended up playing with other pupils as well, due to their feelings of not denying any pupils who

showed an interest in play. Ignoring other pupils caused guilt in the teachers' minds and also the pupils may feel neglected and distance themselves from the teachers. Eventually, they described the use of traditional play with pupils who initiated play with them and employed Intensive Interaction with pupils who needed it:

"Sometimes I was playing with Lookakew and when Butra saw us, he would come closer to me. If I didn't take notice and kept playing with Lookkaew, Butra would frown and put himself in the cupboard, like he's sulking over why I didn't play with him. So I think it's not good, as if I pushed Butra away. And the further the distance, the harder to get back to them". (Benjaporn)

"Once I started playing with a consented pupil, the other kids would gather around us, sat down and watch us with their faces asking why we only played with that certain child, not them. It seemed like they were questioning why you played with this one who didn't want to play? And why didn't you play with us who wanted to? We have no choice. We play with any of them if we aren't so tired". (Areeya)

### **Suspicious Looks from Outsiders**

The viewpoint of outsiders who deemed interactive play as inappropriate for teaching pupils seemed to be perceived as discouraging teachers from using child-led play to develop the pupils. Dareeka described:

"What I dislike is I'm afraid some people who don't know about it will have a negative attitude. Sometimes when we were playing in the room, the parents/visitors outside the class didn't get what it was all about and they didn't like it. There was one day, a scholar

came in and watched for quite long. I guess he was curious because the teaching method is totally different from what they have for pupils in the demonstration school, a building next to us. I'm afraid they won't understand but I'm not anxious my teaching is bad. I don't want anyone to doubt what we do. We aren't just playing but they don't know deeper. They misunderstood us and gave us a sceptical look. Their expression sometimes said this teacher did nothing, only looked at children and played along. Teachers are supposed to be hired to teach, not to play".  
(Dareeka)

Dareeka expressed her concern of being criticised by others whose eyes were filled with suspicion. As mentioned earlier, in Thai educational culture, what people expect from the teachers is less play and more structured-work at all levels of the education system. Play is considered as relaxation or a reward that may be allowed when learning is finished. Generally, learning through play is not generally recognised or understood for Thais. Although Dareeka was quite confident in what she did and was not anxious that her teaching was not good or not right, she felt dislike and seemed to be frustrated that others looked at her teaching with doubt or a negative attitude. Thai teachers are seen as a 'guru'<sup>28</sup> who culturally must be treated with respect and without doubt in their wisdom, both from their pupils and other people. Therefore, they often need a respect from outsiders. To be viewed with suspicion in her accountability caused her frustration.

In this study, the location of two research sites was shared with the regular school for normally developing pupils from the levels of kindergarten to year six. Most of the classrooms in the research sites had long glass windows on both sides which allowed parents and outsiders, such as caregivers of children in the same area, university students, shopkeepers and sellers, to see through to the activities inside classrooms. Some teachers were afraid

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<sup>28</sup> Guru is a Sanskrit word which means Khru or teacher.

outsiders might misunderstand and dislike what they had done to their pupils due to the complete difference in the teaching methods used with the normally developing pupils sharing the same area. Within Thai collectivism, which often avoids conflict, people often doubt and are not asked to clarify that doubt. Whilst this showed criticism avoidance and Kreng jai values according to Thai tradition, it created a silently hidden misunderstanding amongst Thais. Areeya recounted a similar experience, but with intense feelings and negative attitudes:

“Some people can only see that we don’t teach or anything. The outsiders don’t know what we do to the kids. Why we take them into class and do nothing but sit and play? Sometimes they see us [through the glass windows] and wonder what we do. For normal pupils, they were trained to write when they were in their classes. But what we do is putting pupils down and following what they do and say, sometimes it’s not even a language. Some people don’t understand and think we do nothing”. (Areeya)

However, the degree of taking the outsider viewpoint varied. It seemed that the teacher’s personality, confidence, and, especially, the location of school may be an influential factor. Malisa provided another experience:

“There were some teachers who were responsible for teaching pupils with SEN who went to the Intensive Interaction training day, but I am only one that volunteers in this teaching project. So they already knew what the teaching method was about. After I have participated in the project, I also told many teachers what I was going to do with pupils. But there were still some teachers who gave me a strange look at first as this method is quite funny in the eyes of outsiders....Anyway, I did not need to explain because when they saw the pupil was happy and initiated they understood.

If there is anyone doesn't understand or dislike what I did, I will ask them to teach these pupils by themselves". (Malisa)

Malisa is a senior teacher at a research site with a parallel class for special education needs pupils, along with normally developing pupils from kindergarten up to year six in the same school. Malisa described that some teachers in the area of teaching pupils with SEN also participated in the Intensive Interaction training day and thus knew Intensive Interaction. Also, she talked to many teachers about this teaching project and her participation in it. These factors may create understanding and reduce suspicious views from approximately 100 teachers in this school. However, Malisa stated that some other teachers mistook her for being strange in imitating the pupils. The teaching method was rather unusual for outsiders who were unfamiliar with it. However, she stated that other teachers gained more understanding when they noticed the pupils enjoyed it and had more interaction on their own initiative and without explanation to them. In addition to this, her confidence in personality meant she did not take other's opinion into consideration and her authority in a senior position made her not feel frustrated or discouraged by the suspicious eyes.

Another factor was that this school was a closed area where only teachers and pupils could stay in the school. There was not an open area, like the school in the university, where many people could pass by or come in. The location may be the factor that prevented the occurrence of doubt from outsiders' eyes. It should be noted that the concerns about suspicious looks from outsiders were not mentioned by teachers at a research site located on the edge of town and not attached to a school for normally developing pupils. In addition, the participant teachers often acknowledged with parents what they were doing with their children in order to teach parents at the same time.



## **Theme Four: Supporting the Sustainability of Intensive Interaction in the Thai school context**

In order to retain Intensive Interaction within Thai schools many teachers suggested that Intensive Interaction should be formally structured in school. This would allow the teachers to constantly and consistently use it with their pupils:

“There’re some issues that Intensive Interaction may remove if it’s not officially pinned down. I’ve been in this career and have seen many teachers who never wanted to play or only played with their favourite pupils. I think Intensive Interaction will disappear according to teachers’ nature, if it hasn’t been structured obviously in school policy as TEACHH, which can stay in every class”.  
(Benjaporn)

Benjaporn articulated that the use of Intensive Interaction depends on the teacher’s personality and preferences. The teachers who would like to continue to apply Intensive Interaction are those who liked playing and did not entrench themselves in ‘the traditional role of Thai teacher’. She pointed out that the teacher, who naturally preferred formal teaching, disliked playing and was strict about the cultural image of ‘being a teacher and being a pupil in favour of forming good discipline, and would easily leave Intensive Interaction behind if it was not formally structured in school. Formal structure in schools ingrained in collectivist culture meant teachers were willing to follow structure set up by people in high authority, rather than desiring to direct change themselves.

Some teachers recommended that Intensive Interaction should be addressed in the pupils’ Individual Educational Programme (IEP) and the outcome of each session should be recorded. Particularly, Benjaporn stressed the importance of this issue. She stated:

“It will be easy if Intensive Interaction is implemented as a part of the pupil’s IEP. We can separate the kid and teach him/her in one-to-one session. This won’t be hard if Intensive Interaction is structured or clearly pre-planned in IEP, for example, each day we have to take out Lookkaew, Faem and Dew to do Intensive Interaction for 15 minutes in a separate room. This shouldn’t be a problem. But if Intensive Interaction is not clearly structured, the teacher helper may complain about taking care of the rest of the children instead of me. Without a fixed structure, if I only ask my teacher helper that I have to do one-to-one teaching with a kid, she may be reluctant. She may say it’s very tiring to look after the rest of kids in the class. It will certainly happen this way”.  
(Benjaporn)

Benjaporn emphasised formally addressing Intensive Interaction in the pupil’s IEP in order to help remove the pupils for individual teaching sessions as stated in their IEP. Clearly addressing this in IEP would prevent issues that may occur from resistance by teacher helpers, who have to release time to classroom teacher for Intensive Interaction sessions by taking care of the rest of pupils. This could be another issue emerging from the Thai seniority system. In this case, the teacher helper was older and had more experience than Benjaporn, a younger new classroom teacher, and was reluctant to look after the whole class instead of Benjaporn, who would like to do Intensive Interaction with a socially remote pupil in a separate room individually. Although Benjaporn was a classroom teacher, she could not use her authority to ask her helper, as discussed in chapter 5. However, resistance rarely happened if a teacher helper was younger than a classroom teacher. The requirement for a written rule is in need of action, therefore, as it is culturally necessary for a junior teacher to avoid a conflict with a senior one.

When embedded in teachers, Intensive Interaction was perceived as remaining as it has already blended with teachers’ personalities and become a part of their teaching style and professional identities. Dareeka insisted that

Intensive Interaction was similar to her nature and personality and she would continue to apply it although the teaching project had ended:

“For me if I don’t play with children in order to make them familiar with me, I cannot teach them. So play is my habit, but I did not give much time to it in the past. It was like playing aimlessly, no quality. After I knew what Intensive Interaction was, I understand the aim of play, its steps and procedures. So it is certainly not lost as it then becomes a habit”. (Dareeka)

Chareeka is another participant whose personality was suited to Intensive Interaction. She preferred fun in arranging the lesson and insisted that she will certainly use Intensive Interaction with her pupils who need it on appropriate occasions:

“I certainly continue to use Intensive Interaction as I was inspired by it... Normally, I prefer to arrange a playful lesson plan with my pupils”. (Chareeka)

The suggestions most raised were that Intensive Interaction should be formally placed in a curriculum for special education teacher-students. This helps all prospective teachers be aware of Intensive Interaction and can chose an appropriate teaching technique to educate pupils in each stage of their developments:

“The curriculum should be rearranged because Intensive Interaction is very productive and effective, especially with the students with Autism. I know it because I have tried. We must have some new and innovative teaching techniques so we can choose to use the most appropriate ones with each pupil”. (Chaleeta)

Malisa would like to inform more people that Intensive Interaction is one teaching techniques for pupils with SEN:

“It should be put as one of the teaching techniques in a curriculum so more people will know what it is. After testing, I think it works, quite a lot to be precise. More people should know it and it should also be identified as one of the teaching technique for pupils with SEN”. (Malisa)

This is in the hope that when Intensive Interaction was recognised, teachers can work with a newcomer as a team in the future and they may not be viewed with suspicion when they use it.

Parent training in Intensive Interaction was another suggestion. Participants commented that pupils would make a good progress if their parents could use Intensive Interaction with their children at home. The main issue arising from some teachers is the regression of pupils when they are absent from school or during school holidays. Therefore, if parents can use Intensive Interaction at home, children may not regress and teachers may continue teaching from where they left off:

“Parents should also be trained in Intensive Interaction as they can continue to use it with their child at home. Especially when the child cannot attend school or when they are in a long school holiday break. This will be easier to allow us to continue with children from the previous teaching outcome”. (Puntipa)

Some teachers worked with pupils while their parents also attended the session. Rattana introduced and demonstrated Intensive Interaction to parents and encouraged them to do it with their children at home as well:

“We have taught Intensive Interaction to the parents of pupils as well, so that they can continue it with their children at home... A pupil's mother told me that she saw her son made sounds Hood, Hood, while they were working at stall in the market, and she responded that sound back to her child. She said her son smiled and laughed. It seems to him that his mother was playing with him. He has a big smile and liked to be the centre of attention. That pupil's mother told me that Intensive Interaction is okay. She said it worked as her son smiled and enjoyed it”. (Rattana)

It is interesting to note that babysitters noticed a positive change in their children and asked the teachers and myself to teach Intensive Interaction to them because they would like to do Intensive Interaction at home with their children. Although this introduction was just the first step, it held a good benefit for children's progress and for knowledge and practice to be shared continually amongst nannies and teachers:

“The babysitter of Plam wanted to know what we played with Plam. She said Plam is much better socially with Daleeka [a teacher] and did not cry after her anymore. So I had the opportunity to explain how to do Intensive Interaction to her. She said she quite understood it and would try it with Plam at home. The nanny of Plam likes this teaching method because she herself loves to play and she is available for Plam all day. She told me in the other day that she already tried Intensive Interaction with Plam at home and Plam liked it. So she wants to know more about it from you [researcher] as well”. (Jutima)

Another important suggestion was resources for play equipment. The request was noticeably raised for some pupils who were particularly socially remote but highly mobile. The teachers mentioned that these pupils often

walk around outside the classroom to find something they liked. They found that pupils would stop walking when they found play equipment they like:

“Nonny loves the swings in front of the building. But the surroundings out there aren’t very safe. Nonny usually likes to sit on the swings facing the road. And there are lots of vehicles passing on which is dangerous as Nonny likes to walk and run around. It will be splendid if we have a swing in indoor room. If we have swing she will allow us to sit together on another side and from there we can play”. (Lalita)

Lalita suggested having swings in an indoor room to help pupils and having appropriate spaces in a safe environment to participate in Intensive Interaction.

The playground was suggested as a good place for doing Intensive Interaction with a pupil who was isolated and highly mobile. It was described as a ‘comfort place’ for pupils. In one of my teaching observation sessions I observed a pupil, Feam, who would not allow anyone near him. He refused to sit in his own space where he usually did Intensive Interaction sessions with the teacher. He avoided the teacher by walking away. The teacher said he would stop walking if we took him to a playground. When we took him to the playground, he started to feel relaxed and walked to sit on a rocking horse near big trees. He did not refuse when the teacher sat on another rocking horse next to him. From that place, the teacher could use physical contact communication with the pupils and could make short eye-contact with him periodically. Benjaporn suggested:

“It would be wonderful if we have our own playground. Our children like to sit here but many of them, such as Feam, would not enter here [playground] unless others children went home. If he comes here, he will stop wandering. Here, he allows me to sit on another rocking horse next to his. Sometimes, he allows me to

sit back on the same rocking horse and we could have a fun time playing together from his back”. (Benjaporn)

## Conclusion

The role of the teacher and duty of pupils entrenched in Thai culture resulted in the teachers experiencing a sense of profound change from their cultural understandings of what it means to be ‘a teacher’ and ‘a pupil’, as well as what values such as ‘teaching’ and ‘learning’ are. Thai teachers held the role of both teacher in ‘a high place’ and the role of a second parent with *Bunkhun* relationship value. These roles required the pupils to be afraid of the teacher with great respect and obedience in order to return the teacher’s *Bunkhun*. The role of Thai teachers shows a strong sense of control and direction. Although all teachers in this study demonstrated various degrees of their traditional role of being ‘a teacher’ and expectation of duty of pupils, they well recognised this role as a cultural expectation. As a result, the feeling of not being in a teacher’s role, during the Intensive Interaction, was highlighted by every teacher.

The different attitude toward play of the teachers can either foster or impede its implementation. Thai teachers in my study consider play as fun, which dichotomises children’s learning. Teachers, who are normally familiar in applying play to build relationships with pupils, are keen to do Intensive Interaction. In contrast, teachers who perceive that the outcome of play reduces fear and obedience of pupils and has a negative effect on their control of pupil’s behaviour in classroom, often feel uncomfortable in employing Intensive Interaction.

The importance of teaching social and communication abilities was often overlooked as Thai teachers expected pupils to be quiet in class and speak when invited to by the teacher. With the nature of the Thai hierarchical and

collective society, it may seem that there is no motivation for teachers to encourage a pupil to have the initiation of social and communication competence.

The interface of responsive process and objective-based teaching was evident in this study. In general, teachers were categorised into three groups: those with an autonomous feeling, a loss of autonomous feeling, and a fluctuating feeling. Teachers who demonstrated an autonomous feeling showed ability to adjust themselves well toward responsive teaching. Intensive Interaction was articulated to reduce the teachers' stress and anxiety and it also made them feel more confident to work with pupils in a new way of teaching. For teachers who lost their autonomy, they experienced an uncomfortable challenge and maintained that Intensive Interaction is complicated and stressful. The loss of some control over the pupil was described. The implementing process, for some teachers, was in a state of flux. Although the positive outcome of Intensive Interaction was acknowledged, their feelings and understanding were often shifting.

All teachers in this study demonstrated various degrees of improvement and change in their teaching practice. Generally, positive changes were articulated. This included increased recognition of the importance of play, spending more time in play with pupils, changing from teacher-directed play toward responsive play, adapting the body hierarchical position, the use of teasing and fun, and just being with pupils.

Important factors that encourage using Intensive Interaction in the Thai school context included the pupil's positive responses to Intensive Interaction and the principles of Intensive Interaction that made teachers feel comfortable to use it. One of the surprises teachers felt as a result of Intensive Interaction was that the pupils' social abilities occurred without teachers' prompts and these social behaviours transferred to others around them. The first principle of Intensive Interaction that facilitated the implementation amongst the teachers was fun, which is an important value



for Thais. Intensive Interaction was described as an adaptation and application of existing capabilities in teachers themselves as tools for teaching, which does not need any special material and can be applied outside the classroom and in many places.

Inconsistency in teaching opportunities was perceived as a barrier to Intensive Interaction in Thai schools. The imbalance in the staff-pupil ratio caused teachers to not offer constant one-to-one teaching sessions to the pupils. The teaching sessions with the consenting pupils were interrupted by other pupils and this was perceived as an issue for interaction with pupils who were remote and withdrawn, rather than pupils with more social abilities. The viewpoint of outsiders who considered interactive play with pupils not how to teach the pupils were perceived as a discouragement to teachers from using play to develop the pupils. The teachers feared being criticised by others whose eyes were filled with suspicion. However, the degree of taking outsiders' viewpoints varied. It seemed that the teacher's confidence, experience and the location of school may have been influential factors.

In order to support the sustainability of Intensive Interaction in the Thai school context, teachers suggested Intensive Interaction should be formally structured in school and in the pupils' Individual Educational Programme (IEP). This would allow the teachers to constantly use Intensive Interaction with their pupils, otherwise it can fade depending on the teacher's personality and the cultural barrier of the senior system. Intensive Interaction was also recommended to be formally placed in a curriculum for special education student teachers. This would help all prospective teachers to be aware of Intensive Interaction and teachers to work as a team in the future. The playground was suggested as a 'comfort place' for pupils and a good place for doing Intensive Interaction with a pupil who was isolated and highly mobile.

## Chapter Seven: Discussion

### Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to discuss the findings of the study by comparing, contrasting and exploring the connection between the key themes and the existing body of literature. This discussion considers the literature and results from two perspectives. First, there is the practitioners' perspective on Intensive Interaction, Second, there is the practitioners' perspective of their implementation of the pedagogy. This pedagogy employed the principles of Intensive Interaction (a child-centred constructivist approach); by this examination, it is intended that greater breadth and depth will be given to the explanations, leading to a deeper understanding. This will outline the new contribution to knowledge that the thesis makes to the area of work, as detailed in the next chapter. Researching the introduction of Intensive Interaction in Thailand has revealed the fundamental role of the cultural setting as both the enabler of and barrier to the uptake of this practice. It has revealed the extent to which practitioners experienced a cultural transition process of changing their traditional pedagogy when implementing Intensive Interaction, a practice that holds new knowledge, practice understandings and perspectives, and how this has not been well reflected in the current body of literature.

## **Becoming a Responsive Teacher: The Challenge of the Transition Process**

### **The Role of the Thai Teacher and the Duty of Pupils**

Components in Thai culture emerged from the research analysis as a key challenge to teachers' transition to Intensive Interaction, particularly the notion of the traditional role of teachers and teaching and the duty of pupils. In general, this finding endorses Collis and Lacey (1996), who suggest that some teachers in the UK are struggling with the transition from using the old skills-based curriculum based on the behavioural principle, to the freedom curriculum based on the interactive principle, when teaching pupils with learning difficulties in special education schools. They are anxious to control and balance 'the best of both worlds'— rigorous control and giving freedom (p. 4). My teacher participants showed competence in varying degrees to control, balance and maintain the teaching principles of 'old' and 'new' ways. The feelings of some teachers in this study are congruent with those described by British teachers in this field. For instance, Smith (1998) and some practitioners in Stothard's (1998) work felt the clash between the traditional role of controller and the new role of follower. However, whilst trying to harness the old and the new role of the teacher amongst Thai teachers showed some similarities with the works above, the notion of the traditional role of teacher, the meanings of teaching and the images of the national student that Thai teachers have culturally perceived are different from those of the western practitioners (as discussed in chapter 2 and chapter 3). It seems that the notion of the role of teachers perceived in Thailand is much more intense and rigid than the West.

The teachers in this study struggled to recognise the activities they engaged with in Intensive Interaction (imitating, or being down at the pupil's level) as commensurate with their role as a teacher. For them, whilst doing Intensive Interaction, they felt they were not a teacher. Teachers in this study had to

suspend their role as a teacher and move to the role of friend or mother during Intensive Interaction teaching sessions. From this evidence, this research concurs with Windschitl (2002), who provided a theoretical analysis of the implementation of constructivist instruction (a child-centred approach) in classrooms by the teachers in US. Windschitl found that the greatest challenge for teachers relates not only to obtaining new teaching skills but to “making personal sense of constructivism as a basis for instruction” (p. 131). The classroom culture, with its ingrained ‘images of being teacher and students’, is one of the key obstacles to the building of a new pattern of beliefs and practices which accord with constructivist perspectives (Windschitl, 2002 p. 150). Teachers in the study experienced profound change in the inherited role of teacher and the duty of pupils, as well as the meaning of teaching itself. The ‘images’ of being teacher and students - much higher status, high control or even making pupils afraid of them, lower in rank, obedient, passive and dependent - are deep-rooted in Thai school culture. This makes it especially difficult for some Thai teachers to implement fully a new pedagogical approach that has a more student-led approach.

My findings are congruent with a number of Thai studies which have pointed out that the main obstacle of changing from teacher-centred instruction toward student-centred education is the Thai social hierarchical system which leads to the traditionally entrenched teaching approach (Podhisita, 1998; Tiranasar, 2002; Kantamara et al, 2006). Podhisita's study (1998) articulated that the aspect of hierarchy and the *bunkhun* relationship, strongly adhered to in Thai minds, deeply differentiated between ‘high place’ and ‘low place’ in the roles of teachers and students – higher status and lower rank. Tiranasar (2002) agreed that this Thai view may obstruct the change of the roles of teachers and students from teacher-centred into student-centred teaching and learning processes. My findings demonstrated some teachers interpreted a pupil's behaviour that did not follow immediately to her order as a “*slip out of the frame*” of the pupil's duty, showing “*a lack of respect*” to the teacher. This is interpreted as the result of being unafraid of the teachers. This interpretation was connected to the student's lack of consideration to teachers' *bunkhun* to their kindness. As discussed in chapter 3, what Thai

teachers did to their pupils is known as *bunkhun*, not just the duty of teaching academic subjects. To return *bunkhun*, the pupil is expected to be respectful and obedient, which tends to suppress the pupil's initiation and is not consistent with child-led education. This finding provides evidence of how the hierarchical social structure and *bunkhun* relationship is a part of the solid pattern of teacher-directed teaching, which makes it difficult to adjust the role of a teacher and a student towards student-directed education. My findings however show that not all of the teachers are strongly attached to these values; some teachers do not strongly embrace the hierarchical interaction, but show some equality and flexibility in relationships and negotiation with the pupil's need. These findings were key in the initial unpacking of how Intensive Interaction could be introduced to this culturally different context.

This is not to deny, as Atagi (2002) suggests of the direction towards the success of educational reform in Thailand, that there is a collision of ideas when Thai teachers practice a teaching approach using child-centred principles. According to Kantamara et al (2006), Thai teachers are often uncomfortable with the underlying philosophy of child-centred approaches. Pillay's (2002) report of 'teacher development for quality learning: the Thailand educational reform project' also found that Thai educators do not have a deep understanding of the principles and assumptions underpinning student-centred learning. Atagi (2002) and Pillay (2002) analysed that teachers in Thailand have not participated in international 'learning communities' and lack an opportunity to get access to pedagogic innovations and research from outside the country. In consequence, there is a large gap between knowledge and teaching practices from international countries and those that are practised in Thailand. This was supported in my own research that the knowledge of all my teacher participants was obtained only from the local community within their culture. In consequence, there was a collision of the old and the new ideas of pedagogies and this caused the challenge to bridge the gap.

This research also supports the findings of Kantamara et al (2006), who contended that in Thailand the change in the teaching and learning process toward student-centred education has been lagged behind by the strong belief in traditional Thai cultures that knowledge is associated with hierarchy and thus the pupils were not regarded as important sources of knowledge. In addition, the Thai teacher is both teacher and second parent, responsible not only for instructing good knowledge, but also for instilling good values and morals, and shaping the pupils to be good citizens in Thai society (NNT, 2011; Thamraksa, 2003). This combination of elements of the hierarchical social system, with the cultural idea of being both a teacher and a second parent, makes Thai teachers believe deeply that the sources of the important knowledge reside in them and these should be directly transmitted to the students. This ingrained idea makes it difficult to accept that a pupil, particularly a pupil with autism and SLD, is an active agent who can participate in the learning process and knowledge construction. Some teachers first perceived child-led play as 'indulging' a child, which implies the slip of good discipline. This was revealed as a cultural and pedagogical barrier to fostering a learning and teaching process that applies the philosophies of a child-centred approach, responsive teaching, teaching through interactive play and social construction.

It would be beneficial to delve into the origin of hierarchy and *bunkhun* relationships, which are perceived as causing solid teacher-directed education in Thailand. The origin of hierarchy and *bunkhun* relationship is perceived differently. Some scholars suggest that aspects of hierarchy and *bunkhun* relationship relate to karma, an essential element of Buddhist teachings (Khemmani, 1994; Podhisita, 1998; Tiranasar, 2002). Buddhism is perceived as a barrier to adjusting the role of a teacher from direct and control to facilitator in student-centred education. This belief is a basic assumption held by many Thai people and seems to be hard to change.

On the other hand, some scholars argue that hierarchy originates from social and economic structures within the country which use religion as a power

tool to make people in that country have faith and belief in people with high status. Sivaraksa (2005, 2011)<sup>29</sup> verified that the Buddha went against social hierarchy. Thai Buddhism has changed to *Sadina* as it views people as unequal. Sivaraksa stated '*Thai religion is not the teachings of the Buddha, but is the teachings of some people*'. Chareonwongsak (2011)<sup>30</sup> scrutinized the Asian way of living and explained that social and economic structures in the East Asian Region, including Thailand, played a role with the religious ideologies in order to form the hierarchical system within those countries. Panit (2011) articulated that Buddhism in Thailand has already dramatically changed from its origin (the Theravada Buddhism) to another form of religion, which uses religion as a power tool to dominate society. Panit maintained that in Thailand, being a Buddhist society, people have no intellectual foundation but they are prepared to have faith and believe people with high status.

Until today, the meaning of *Karma* in Buddhism is still interpreted and applied differently. Thai people are in a transition where they choose which side of belief to adopt. The adjustment of Thai belief in relation to religion, *Karma*, hierarchy and *bunghun* requires time. I suggest the potential way for altering the solid role of teacher is a re-establishment of the belief and value of where knowledge can come from. The knowledge and principle from international best practice, such as social constructivist perspectives, which propose that learning and knowledge is construction, and occurs as students actively engage and experience in their own activity and constructs their own meanings, should be clearly addressed in pre-service teacher preparation.

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<sup>29</sup> Sivaraksa was awarded the Alternative Nobel Prize (Right Livelihood Award) in 1995.

<sup>30</sup> Professor Kriengsak Chareonwongsak is President of the Institute of Future Studies for Development in Thailand and Chairman of Success Group of Companies in Thailand.

## **The Role of Attitudes to Play in Children's Development and Cultural Imperative in Implementing Intensive Interaction**

This research found that a positive attitude toward play is an accelerator to adopting and continuing to implement Intensive Interaction. This is consistent with the British scholars, Hewett, (2006b) and Firth et al (2010). Thai teachers who had a positive attitude toward play and used it to connect to their pupils were pleased when they knew that Intensive Interaction is a teaching approach. This matches with Firth et al (2010) who mentioned that many people felt relieved when Intensive Interaction was introduced into the workplace because the approach was compatible with their current characteristics and experiences. The positive attitude to play and experience helped teachers in my study explore a variety of ways to respond to child-led activities. This is contrary to teachers who were strictly within the Thai traditional role of teacher and perceived that their role of teacher in a 'high place' was negatively affected by play. This finding supports the notion that educational innovations are better adopted in a way that is consistent with the teachers' beliefs (Fullan 2007; Hermans, Tondeur, Braak, and Valcke, 2008).

Teachers in my study felt, as do Firth et al (2010), that Intensive Interaction sessions were not like work: 'not teach, but play'. Moreover, the Thai teachers' feelings of 'only play, not teach' matched their strong feelings of not being a teacher, but being a friend. The evidence from the research is similar to the study of Cheng and Stimpson (2004). Cheng and Stimpson found that Hong Kong teachers faced professional challenges in implementing a child-centred pedagogy in which play is central. One reason is they had a dichotomised concept of play and learning culturally. This result also lends an agreement with cross-cultural studies, for example Taylor et al (2010) and Parmar et al (2004), who found that teachers and parents of Asian backgrounds often have a separated concept of play and children's learning and development.



Consistent with Hughes (1998), the social environment of children with SEN is often not supportive of play and less free play is found in early childhood special education programmes than in mainstream early childhood programme. Reasons for this include the possibility that adults may fail to recognise the value of play for young children with SEN. Hewett (2006b, p.10) pointed out that the lack of knowledge, expertise and confidence in how to teach through play is another reason for the absence of play activities in some special schools. This was borne out by my own findings in this study. In this study, Thai special education teachers did not believe the role of play was a tool for children's learning and education, but only enjoyment, a waste of time and, for some teachers, even a barrier to teaching.

After Intensive Interaction was introduced and implemented, many teachers had a more positive attitude to play and recognised the relationships between play and child learning. However, there is still an important gap in teachers' attitudes and ability to connect play with an effective teaching goal. This finding supports those of Haney and Bissonnette (2011), Rogers, (2011), and Saracho and Spodek, (1998) who reported that although teachers value children's play, and recognised connections between children's play and learning, they often do not know how to guide that play into a more educational purpose. All teachers in my study highlighted the success of using Intensive Interaction in the level of social-emotional development and early communicative ability, such as physical proximity, enjoyment, initiating interaction, body language and vocalisation. However, some lacked confidence to take this on to the level of communicative skill development. One possible explanation is that in the stage of teaching communicative skills, their feelings moved out of 'play' [responsive teaching] towards the idea of traditional 'teaching' [impart information with directive control approach]. The cultural image of 'teaching' returned back to them and made them feel unconfident to 'teach' communicative skills through responsive teaching. For them, it seems challenging to equate learning through play with 'teaching' they perceived culturally.

The findings of McLane et al (1996) suggested that teachers' attitudes toward play seemed to stem from their professional training, their work with children and their own childhood experiences. These childhood experiences and memories of play were identified as a crucial step towards effectively adopting play in teacher training programmes (Klugman, 1996). Evidence from this research found that, previously, all teachers did not have knowledge of the connection between children's development and their play and also suggested they did not receive fundamental knowledge of play in a child's development from their educational experiences. The perspectives on this knowledge derived from their personal background and work experiences with pupils.

In Thailand, play has been well established for pre-service early childhood education teachers. Bloch and Wichaidit (1986) found Thai teachers in early childhood programmes had a positive attitude toward play, which is consistent with the research findings of Israsena (2007), who studied the current status of the early childhood educators' learner-centred beliefs and practices in Thailand using questionnaires from 93 Thai preschool and kindergarten teachers. She found that Thai early childhood education teachers highly endorsed learner-centred beliefs. This finding supports Welteroth (1999), who noted that Special Education has different roots from early childhood education. Influenced by behaviourism, teachers in the field of special education in Thailand had negative notions and misunderstandings about play. The lack of knowledge of the history and importance of play to child's learning and development influenced some teachers in this study, who did not appreciate the importance of a child-centred approach and its connections with teaching aims. Furthermore, this lack of knowledge yields a weakness in defending the value of play for teachers who had a positive attitude about play and were using it in current teaching practice.

The results of Israsena (2007), however, showed that Thai early childhood teachers demonstrated low levels of learner-centred practice and high levels of developmentally inappropriate practices in comparison with American early childhood educators. This may indicate that although learner-centred

learning or learning through play is positively believed to be an important part of early childhood education, in real practice play was less guided towards the child's education. As a result of their professional training, it seemed that although Thai early childhood education had more knowledge and positive attitudes about play and child education than special education teachers in this study, they both faced the challenge to connect it to educational aims.

According to McLane et.al (1996) and Klugman (1996), the beliefs of teaching through play of Thai teachers in this study may result from their own childhood experiences and memories of play in educational experiences. Research showed a link between the teacher's 'pedagogical beliefs' and classroom practice. Pajares (1992) suggests that an educational belief of teachers is a crucial role in their acquisition and interpretation of knowledge and subsequent teaching behaviour. The study by Holt-Reynolds (1992) found that teachers' beliefs about teaching and learning are obtained in childhood, from experiences in the classroom as students. Kagan (1992) reviewed 40 learning to teaching studies conducted in the US, UK and Canada, contended that teachers' beliefs tend to be very determined and become a part of self-image. Thai traditional teaching has not involved play. From my findings, some teachers even perceived play as a barrier to traditional learning and the role of teacher.

The strong teacher-directed and controlled teaching and learning atmosphere focusing mainly on rote learning (as discussed in chapter 3), is accumulated and absorbed since childhood, in school to university. It is possible these educational experiences from the Thai traditional classroom are formed in their conceptions and become an 'image'. It seems that this image and the absence of previous knowledge and experiences in using play for child development caused some teachers to use their traditional teaching memories when they felt they were turning to teaching. It seems teachers in my study felt that communicative skill development was a form of teaching different from fostering social-early communicative ability, which was perceived as 'only play'. This may explain why they felt unconfident using responsive play for formal teaching. It seems the cultural image in the

teacher's memory and beliefs about teaching and learning are barriers for moving to teaching through child-led play activities.

### **Improving Awareness of Social Experiences and Initiated-Communication as Part of Child Development**

Evidence from this research supports Hughes' (1998) and McConkey's (1985) argument that early childhood special education programmes that focus mainly on teaching academic skills and less play reduce opportunities for children to engage in social interaction. As previously stated, the existing learning schedules did not formally address the needs of fostering social and communication abilities. Pupils' communication and language was sometimes promoted by chance via pictures, and asking for something and prompting by imitating the teacher's word, but this was completely separate from social sharing and mutual pleasure. The finding is in line with the work of Stothard (1998), who argued that 'communication was seen as a means of asking for something instead of a means of building relationships, expressing feelings, making sense of the world and of expressing who we really are' (p.150).

My finding is consistent with the literature discussed in chapter 3 that the pattern of communication in hierarchical social systems and collectivist society tended to remain one way, from teacher to pupils. Some teachers in this study paid very little attention to fostering or initiating social activities and communication. They desired the child's characteristics of being 'silent' as the way to develop one's personality and morality. This links to the finding of UNESCO Bangkok (2004) in assessing obstacles to early childhood development in Thailand. Thai scholars noted several cultural factors that inhibited early years education, such as perceived norms and beliefs, which influenced different understandings about the nature of children's development. These included the view that children are passive and dependent learners, who need to be subjected to parental control, and

should be invisible so as not to distract or disrupt adult activities. It appears that this view concurs with that of some teachers in this study as well. With the culture of the Thai hierarchical classroom and good pupils' characteristics, there is less motivation for adults and teachers to encourage a pupil to initiate social and communicative abilities.

Another explanation is consistent with Dunn and Dasananda's (1995) finding that Thai teachers and parents often focus more on preparing pupils for the next level of education. Therefore, pre-academic and self-help skills are the focus rather than meeting pupils' current educational needs, such as social and communicative initiation. This is a possible explanation for why, following the introduction of Intensive Interaction, teachers acknowledged the importance of social interaction and communicative abilities. However, some teachers tended not to take advantage of naturally occurring situations to foster social and initiated communication with their pupils. Rather they used the positive outcome of the increase in social abilities and good relationships from Intensive Interaction to connect with teaching pre-academic skills they culturally valued.

### **The Interface of Responsive Process and Objective-based Teaching**

The results illuminated the interface of Thai traditional teaching (the objective-based approach) and Intensive Interaction (a responsive process with no predetermined objective). The teachers in my study showed varied ability in adapting their teaching values in order to take on Intensive Interaction. The abilities to respond interactively to child-led play without using a pre-determined objective led to an outcome focus dependent partly on personal background and preferences. Nind (2000) found that teachers tend to focus on objective structured teaching and overlook a process of interaction which is the crucial system in Intensive Interaction. Some teachers in my study had difficulties in knowing what to do when the session was not objective-outcome focused. In the Thai high power distance and

strong uncertain avoidance society, the teacher holds the status of the know-it-all in everything and thus teaches in the style of direct instruction and control, as discussed in chapter 3. Some teachers preferred explicit teaching with clear small objectives where they were able to know which step they were doing. For example, a teacher expressed her frustration at feeling unsuccessful in the running of her Intensive Interaction teaching session as sequence steps. Firth et al (2010) observed that, for some practitioners, patience about lack of success is quite difficult to achieve. Practitioners felt success in their teaching after their pre-planned objective was transmitted. Some teachers in my study preferred to have satisfaction and success with their teaching when the pre-planned objective was delivered, but they were frustrated and uncertain when teaching situations did not permit clear transmission of content knowledge (Cheng and Stimpson, 2004).

Shifting to a responsive process of trial and error is a challenge. Teachers in my study experienced feelings of fluctuation and uncertainty in the process of Intensive Interaction implementation which is consistent with Zeedyk et al (2009a). They described that their practitioners felt 'a moment of uncertainty' about the effectiveness in employing Intensive Interaction. Stothard (1998, p.161) also found that, for some teachers, the teaching principle that emphasized the responsive process of trial and error is quite difficult to overcome. Some teachers felt 'a little wary' and reluctant to leave behavioural strategies, although they were pleased to see the value of Intensive Interaction used within their session. This feeling is consistent with some teachers in my study who found that it was very difficult for them to leave behavioural method strategies, although they were satisfied to see the merit of Intensive Interaction.

Some Thai teachers felt stressed and anxious in teaching sessions. They had culturally strong feelings about the role of 'righteous guru'<sup>31</sup> from the

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<sup>31</sup> One who claims to know everything, tends to reject advice or information from others and is morally correct.

traditional status of the teacher (Thamraksa, 2003, p.2) and felt insecure to move away from that position. Rigid ideas of how to teach within their culture, as discussed previously, made it very hard to move toward trial and error teaching processes, which require abilities of exploratory inquiry and sensitive responses. In the trial and error process, teachers did not feel 'righteous', but guilty for not providing proper responses and satisfying the pupil. This relates to the findings of Cheng and Stimpson (2004), who explained that one barrier of teaching through play is the teacher's limitation of independent critical thinking and personal inquiry. They found that the teacher who found it difficult to include play in the child's learning often thinks rigidly. This teacher tended to ask for my suggestions and struggled and was anxious to find her own way in this trial and error practice. To improve the teacher's ability of trial and error teaching processes, critical thinking, exploratory inquiry and sensitive responses need to be developed.

In the teacher education development of the UNESCO project, Ainscow, Bailey, Barnes, Barnes and Roebeck-Tuala (UNESCO Bangkok, 2005) reported that Thai teachers in inclusion developed their practice through the process of trial and error. This links to the findings of McLane et al (1996) and Klugman (1996), as discussed earlier, that the formation of the development process in a teacher's teaching practice comes from their experience as students, and the observations of other practitioners and their lecturers in teacher education. As discussed, in Thai teaching culture, teachers had been trained in the didactic method of lecturing based primarily on teacher-directed approaches by rote learning. Teachers were very familiar with the pattern of step-by-step teaching methods they experienced in their own learning curriculum. They are possibly not trained to think flexibly and were not prepared to be creative in a responsive-learning process. This has a great impact when switching to child-led activity based on teacher-responsive teaching approaches, especially teaching through play which has complex and subtle characteristics (Hewett, 2006).

Importantly, from my findings, this make us recognises that from the past to present pre-service special education teachers have been exclusively trained

in the field of behaviourist psychology applying objective-based teaching and an orderly structural instruction for developing all pupils with SEN. Special education teachers have applied behavioural approaches as both the theory of a child's learning and how to educate the pupils. This objective-based teaching with teacher-controlled style is well matched with Thai cultural teaching. Together with the traditional didactic approach that teachers receive from other subjects in their educational experiences, the cultural belief that the best source of knowledge resides in the teachers makes them become a special education teacher with rigid ideas of teacher-controlled teaching approaches. It seems that the Thai teacher training course did not foster the viewpoint to educate pre-service special education teachers to think creatively and flexibly to respond to the child-led education approach.

### **Improvement and Change of Teachers' Teaching Practice**

In this study, the effects of Intensive Interaction on the improvement in practitioners' communicative teaching skills and the changes to their personality are consistent with a body of evidence on Intensive Interaction. According to Nind (1999), staff improve motivation, are more positive and more receptive to pupils' signals, are more understanding of pupils and improve their observation abilities. Almost all teachers in my study expressed their improvement in the same way, particularly the improvements in teachers' observation skills, which were highlighted by all of them. They also expressed calmness, flexibility and positivity to the pupils' stereotyped behaviour. The feeling of being annoyed by such stereotyped behaviour and attempting to strongly forbid it were radically changed. These new points of view were considered to have brought a peaceful atmosphere to the whole classroom as well. Consistent with the study of Watson and Knight (1991, p. 323-4), teachers in my study became more relaxed and willing to wait for a pupil's responses. They became positive towards play and acknowledged its importance. The increase in interactive game-playing supports the findings of (Zeedyk, 2009) that practitioners have a sense of connection with the children and become more responsive, calmer, and curious.



The teachers' feelings about learning from the pupils here are consistent with those of Firth (2007). However, in my study, these experiences were articulated by a few teachers. As discussed, Thai teachers believe that they are a good source of knowledge and students learn from them, not a diverse group of sources. It may be difficult, for some teachers, to move out from the role of 'righteous guru' as discussed earlier, and move toward the role of a learner alongside the children (Thamraksa, 2003, p.2). This may explain the lower occurrence of teachers' perceptions in relation to 'learning from the pupils'.

My research also matches with Smith (1998) in that staff felt clear about how, why and what they are doing. Some teachers in my study, who said they used to do something similar to Intensive Interaction but were not clear about it, demonstrated a clear sense of what, why and how they were doing previously after experimenting with the intervention. My findings support that of Nind and Hewett (1988) in that applying interactive games is a way of teaching we must accept as making *'heavy demands on personal skills and abilities and blur[ring] the boundary between personality and professionalism'* (p. 55). Evidence from the research found that the teachers' changes in practice were perceived as varied and highly unique. This may come from the combinations of the principles of Intensive Interaction and the elements of Thai culture they adopted, and their own original personality.

Smith (1998) also argued that utilising the Intensive Interaction of staff would combine with teachers' personality and thus they developed their own style of Intensive Interaction in working with learners. She also reported that staff enjoyed the opportunity of applying their own personal skills, and developing their own individual work with the student. In contrast, although every Thai teacher has developed his/her own teaching style of Intensive Interaction, they have often been seeking 'the sameness' amongst them. Their desire for 'sameness' in teaching style may be explained by the characteristic of collectivism in Thai in-group culture, which requires change to be group

change. For example, Benjaporn desired a group of teachers be employed in Intensive Interaction to the same degree that she was. For her, Intensive Interaction was regarded as what frees her from being criticized and backs up her beliefs and previous practice in working with her pupils. She was keen and wanted to use Intensive Interaction as much as she could. Benjaporn also expressed her concerns about the strong and noisy playing style of Areeya as she did not agree with it, preferring instead a tender and sensitive responding style.

### **Promoting Factors to Intensive Interaction in the Thai School Context**

Some teachers in this study started Intensive Interaction with a sceptical mind, which concurred with Zeedyk, et al. (2009), who found that the practitioners commented on doubts that they initially had about this teaching method. At first, some teachers did not believe in the principle of Intensive Interaction as it is perceived as 'only play' and 'too simple'. However, some teachers, although they doubted the approach of Intensive Interaction, had faith in the model of caregiver-infant interaction, the principle of Intensive Interaction. This refutes Kellet's (2000) argument that the first stage of communication between caregivers and infants is easily undervalued. Whilst some teachers in my study showed some doubt about child-led play in keeping with the cultural perceptions previously discussed, they appreciated the model of caregiver-infant interaction; as one teacher maintained, Intensive Interaction must have a good outcome as 'it is how our parents raise us'.

The research findings suggest that the teachers supported Intensive Interaction to be an effective pedagogy for facilitating fundamental communication for pupils with autism and SLD. The pupil's positive responses to Intensive Interaction were viewed as the most important factor in encouraging teachers to use it. This study supports the existing literature that Intensive Interaction is viewed as a useful tool in building good

relationships, confidence and trust with pupils (Watson and Knight, 1991; Watson and Fisher, 1997; Barber, 2008; Zeedyk et al., 2009 and, for adults, Firth, 2007).

In this study, new positive social behaviours were observed by both the teachers and the researcher. This included increased social engagement, enjoyment, physical proximity, initiation, awareness of the social environment, and pre-verbal and word communication. This evidence closely corresponds with those from other studies evaluating outcomes of Intensive Interaction for pupils and young children (Watson and Knight 1991; Watson and Fisher 1997; Kellett 2000; 2003; Barber 2008; Zeedyk et al 2009; and for adults, Nind 1996; Lovell et al, 1998). The report of teachers reducing stereotyped behaviour is consistent with Nind (1993) and Kellett, (2001). Although this finding was in an early stage and cannot be strong evidence, the positive signs appeared.

Positive behaviours were not only noticed during intensive interaction sessions, but they were also observed in the other daily routines and learning activities of pupils. The findings concur with those of Watson and Knight (1991). Overall, evidence found in this study supports the argument of Collis and Lacey (1996), Nind et al (2001) and Watson and Knight (1991), in that it is easier to form a relationship with interactive experiences and from that point we can determine the amount of learning which leads to other development. With the positive responses that occurred for all pupils with whom the teachers used Intensive Interaction, almost all teachers commented that Intensive Interaction is suitable as a teaching approach not only for pupils with autism and/or SLD, but also all of children. This research finding advocates the theory of Intensive Interaction as a principle of good teaching for all (Nind and Cochrane, 2002).

Nind (1999) suggested the term 'versatility', when referring to the comments of staff in describing Intensive Interaction as a teaching tool which "can be used anywhere without special equipment" (p.100). All teachers in this study

also articulated that Intensive Interaction can be utilised everywhere outside the classroom. Whilst Intensive Interaction requires personal skills and abilities which could lead to an overlap of practitioner's personality and professionalism, as earlier stated by Nind and Hewett, (1988), this could be one promoting factor in its implementation. As a teaching tool employing human nature, some teachers stated 'it [Intensive Interaction] is knowledge that resides within us'; it thus does not need special equipment or special venues. 'Versatility' is an encouraging aspect of Intensive Interaction implementation, which was supported in this study.

Mutual pleasure was perceived as an encouraging factor for teachers to use Intensive Interaction. However, this feeling's encouragement depends on the teachers' beliefs and characteristics, which means they would like to use it as it is compatible with their beliefs and personalities. Most teachers articulated that they like to do Intensive Interaction because 'it is fun' and the fun matches with their nature of *sanuk*, one important element of Thai culture. On the other hand, the fun or *sanuk* is perceived as a barrier to Intensive Interaction for some teachers who did not like to play and considered it could negatively influence their role of teacher in the 'high place'.

### **Perceived Barriers Perceived to Intensive Interaction in Thai School**

Inconsistency in teaching opportunity was reported as an obstacle, and this concurs with in existing studies. Staff shortages and staff time were mentioned in Samuel (2001 a), Irvine (2001), Samuel et al (2008) and Firth et al (2007). Samuel, (2001 a) identified the low staff to client ratio as a limitation factor for undertaking and evaluating Intensive Interaction. Likewise, the study of Irvine (2001) reported a problem of staff time that was inadequate to respond consistently to all service users' requests. Samuel et al (2008) mentioned that practitioners used Intensive Interaction inconsistently, causing the intervention process to be delayed. Firth et al

(2007) identified staff shortages as barriers to the success of Intensive Interaction adoption and perceived this as limiting the opportunities for staff to engage in Intensive Interaction sessions with the clients. Teachers in this study perceived a high pupil-teacher ratio of 12-20 pupils per teacher as the largest barrier for doing Intensive Interaction in Thai schools.

Evidence from the research found that tiredness from existing workload caused some teachers to be less enthusiastic to any added responsibilities, which were also indicated as challenging. This finding is consistent with Firth et al (2007) who described the feelings of staff as being 'overly burdened' and therefore uninspired to accept any extra responsibilities. In the current study, the teachers worked from 7:00-15:30-17:00 and had to teach in an extra-hours session after school and also at the weekend as a requirement of school policy. The teachers' expressions written in the field diary included 'everything seems to be profuse', 'everything is thrown on the teacher' or 'today so exhausted if I played it would not be fun'. The class size issue and working hours were perceived as impacting upon teachers' enthusiasm to do Intensive Interaction, in which fun-play pleasure is the central. According to Nind (2003), there are other pressures that sometimes affect teachers' collaborations. For example, some teachers felt uncomfortable towards some university staff and were unwilling to take part in workshops arranged at the university. The teachers' feelings were up-and-down and needed on-going compromise and negotiation throughout the research project.

The findings highlight a barrier in relation to suspicious looks from outsiders, such as other teachers and people influencing the teachers' confidence in continuing Intensive Interaction, which is consistent with Taylor and Taylor (1998) and Samuel and Maggs (1998), who mentioned that some practitioners felt worried about perspectives of others on the teaching session based on the 'tasklessness', which did not adequately specify an objective. Within the role of the Thai traditional teacher, they must take the responsibility of teacher-directed and rote learning (Kantamara, 2006, p.6). Teachers in my study had their responsibility questioned as their teaching

was not typical teaching practice (Windschitl, 2002). The teachers were concerned with how teaching sessions looked to others who were not involved or did not know about Intensive Interaction. This feeling sometimes caused some teachers' frustration. In hierarchical society, Thai teachers require respect from others and thus being doubted in their responsibilities can cause frustration. Taylor and Taylor (1998) also pointed out that, for outsider's informal observation, Intensive Interaction may appear to be 'completely anarchic' (p. 215). This included the abandonment of the table and chair, allowing the child to flit round the room and run to the next room, with an adult following him but not making him stay put. Some teachers in this study felt doing Intensive Interaction was doing 'nonsense' from other people eyes, such as letting the pupil lead play on the floor, with the teacher imitating his noises and behaviours, instead of sitting and doing activities at a table and chair like in normal school. This feeling influenced their confidence to utilise Intensive Interaction as a teaching method. Evidence from this finding showed an existence of tensions between teachers adopting Intensive Interaction or child-led play for children's development and their desires to receive the respect from the perspectives of others, which is a main issue at times of transition in Thailand.

### **Supporting the Sustainability of Intensive Interaction in the Thai School Context**

Evidence from the research found that teachers felt formally-structured Intensive Interaction is needed to support its sustainability in Thai schools. This finding concurs with Firth et al (2007) who explained that the teaching approach which focuses only on individual skills will disappear gradually if the policy was not included in the workplace. In these findings, I observed that the maintenance of Intensive Interaction can be on both the level of individual and school context. On an individual level, for the teachers who showed enjoyment playing with pupils and a willingness to develop a new orientation in their professional skills, Intensive Interaction is more likely to be

maintained due to intrinsic motivation, at least, where they recognised that Intensive Interaction is necessary for a particular pupil. This is consistent with Samuel and Maggs (1998) who described the feelings of some staff after they knew the principle of Intensive Interaction, in that it is impossible not to use it with learners with SLD. On the other hand, for teachers who did not play and preferred the traditional teaching direction, Intensive Interaction would be likely to disappear. Certainly, there may have been a reduction of practice in both the groups of teachers if they were not given support by me and were left to their own motivation. The establishment of a policy in the level of school routine would prevent 'novelty decay', which is the reduction in the level of staff interest compared to an initial period as time progressed (Firth et al, 2007). The establishment of school policy would maintain a higher level of work of Intensive Interaction in school as every teacher would have to implement it.

The suggestion of formalising Intensive Interaction concurs with the work of Stothard (1998), who supported addressing Intensive Interaction as a formal teaching objective in pupil IEPs in order to constantly use it with the pupils. However, she pointed out many problems which could possibly occur, such as the session would become teacher-led, and focused on the teacher's objectives so that it fails to recognise other learning that is naturally happening. It also puts pressure on the pupils and teacher to have to reach a specific objective. It means teachers may try to make a specific objectives happen, which is not the principle of Intensive Interaction. Ware (1994, p. 130-131) suggests that Intensive Interaction should be kept in the normal routine activities of a classroom day with the intention of responding to pupils regardless of the content of the interaction. The informal interaction during a classroom day was endorsed by Samuel and Maggs (1998) who argued that the interactive activities that occurred naturally throughout the day were more effective and that formal sessions may be not allowed to interact due to the mood of both the learner and practitioners. Samuel and Maggs and practitioners but not teachers felt more comfortable using Intensive Interaction principles in a natural setting which was more appropriate and gained the best result. Firth et al (2007) also noted that the staff in their study

chose the 'best time' to interact spontaneously as the possible responsiveness of the clients varied and cannot be predicted.

Some teachers in my study strongly recommended that Intensive Interaction should be formally addressed in pupil IEPs to facilitate or allow them to find the best time to do Intensive Interaction. According to the characteristics of Thailand's hierarchical social structure, formally addressing the issue in pupil IEPs is considered as a rule required for facilitating the occurrence of work. This rule would be helpful for some junior teachers who are keen to do Intensive Interaction with socially remote children in one-to-one sessions, but they do not have the courage or *Kreng jai* to ask their senior teacher helper to take care the rest of pupils in the classroom. Therefore, according to Thai high hierarchy, the establishment of rule is required to prevent disagreements between older and younger staff members.

The teachers argued that resources, such as indoor play equipment or playgroup, are another important factor to facilitate Intensive Interaction. This is consistent with Irvine (1998) who reported teachers in her study suggested swings and roundabouts for people with SLD. Play equipment is likely to help pupils feel comfortable and calm. Teachers in my study considered resources, such as soft play equipment, swings and playgrounds as comfortable places for their pupils. It helped pupils to stop wandering around and to sit down, and feel relaxed, and for that moment pupils tended to allow the teachers to do Intensive Interaction with them. Having some resources is likely to allow and foster the teachers to keep using Intensive Interaction in Thai schools.

Apart from the suggestion to sustain Intensive Interaction in the Thai schools level, many teachers in my study recommended the establishment of Intensive Interaction in the curriculum of student teachers as one teaching approach for pupils with SEN. They believed the new knowledge of Intensive Interaction may be an important step to spread Intensive Interaction and this will be helpful for them to work as a team with a new teacher. The research



findings suggest that parent training should be considered as an effective way to increase the efficacy of intensive interaction as parents are available when children have long school holidays. Parent-child interaction is helpful for them and for teachers to readily continue Intensive Interaction when the child is back to school.

## Chapter Eight Conclusion

This thesis topic was chosen both for the reasons of my profession and my passion for improving the education of children with autism and SLD. The intention was to seek a new teaching approach, which combined the idea of play as a communication tool essential for educating this group of children; in this way, I was guided to Intensive Interaction. I sought to discover the perceptions of teaching pre-verbal pupils with autism and SLD with the objective to explore the aspects of the cultural context in Thailand that may affect the early implementation of Intensive Interaction. Hermeneutic phenomenology was undertaken, aiming to understand teaching perceptions that were influenced by their cultural context.

The research questions were:

- How do Thai teachers perceive Intensive Interaction as an approach to work with pupils with autism and SLD in the Thai context?
- What are the key factors in Thai culture that influence the adoption of Intensive Interaction?
- What factors encourage or discourage the use of the Intensive Interaction approach in the Thai school context?
- What actions are needed for Intensive Interaction to be more compatible with Thai teachers and their schools?

### Answers to the research question

*How do Thai teachers perceive Intensive Interaction as an approach to work with pupils with autism and SLD in the Thai context?*

This research showed that perceptions of teaching with Intensive Interaction for pre-verbal pupils with autism and SLD were perceived both positively and

negatively. Although starting from sceptical minds, their perceptions showed that Intensive Interaction created positive outcomes in relation to fundamental social-communicative development for pupils with autism and SLD in the teaching programme and that Intensive Interaction would yield a positive result for all children. However, embedded in the different levels of culture, teachers expressed different perceptions in implementation, for instance comfortable or uncomfortable feelings during teaching sessions, and satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the pupils' characteristics which are different from those that the traditional teacher desired.

*What are the key factors in Thai culture that influence the adoption of the Intensive Interaction?*

The teacher's adoption was influenced by key factors in the Thai cultural context: the hierarchical role of the teacher and duty of pupils in society, the attitude to play in children's development, the awareness of social experiences and initiated-communication, as well as the interface of responsive process and objective-based teaching. These cultural pedagogical factors influenced the degree of the improvement and change in teachers' teaching practice. Key cultural factors challenged the Thai teachers in the transition process, which was shifting from the Thai traditional teacher who controlled and led teaching situations with hierarchical inequality to a responsive teacher who responded to child-led activities based on equal mutual relationship with pupils. The individual perception was influenced, however, by both the individual's personality and the collective culture. The individual's personality differently affected the degree of acceptance of the Thai traditional culture leading to important differences in their ability to implement Intensive Interaction. The image of the role of the teacher and duty of pupils, for instance, was recognised culturally by all teachers, but in practice they accepted and applied this diversely in relation to their personalities and experiences. Also, play was offered to pupils to a degree depending on the teacher's personality and preference, although they all culturally perceived it is a separate idea from children's learning.

*What factors encourage or discourage the use of the Intensive Interaction approach in the Thai school context?*

The important factors which encouraged the use of the Intensive Interaction in the Thai school context were the pupils' positive responses as a result of Intensive Interaction, such as engendering trust from the pupils, the development of communicative abilities, and the positive signs to reduce stereotyped behaviour and increase generalisation, as well as the principles of Intensive Interaction that made teachers feel it was not difficult to use it, such as the existing capability in human nature, 'versatility' of the natural model and the fun it gave. In addition, motivation from caregivers was an encouraging factor for teachers as well. The key factors, which were perceived as a discouragement of its application in the school context, were inconsistency in teaching opportunities and suspicious looks from outsiders.

*What actions are needed for Intensive Interaction to be more compatible with Thai teachers and their schools?*

The actions that are recommended to support the sustainability of Intensive Interaction to be more compatible with Thai teachers and their schools, including the establishment of a formalised structure of Intensive Interaction in schools and in IEPs, teacher training, parent training, and resources.

Whilst some aspects of Thai culture were barriers to teaching through child-led play, at the same time they could be used as supportive aspects for engaging teachers in unfamiliar pedagogical approaches from the West. For instance, high power distance or hierarchical social structure challenged teachers to share power and respond to the child's play and his/her communication. Meanwhile this cultural aspect can be an advantage for starting the teaching programme. From the start, the hierarchical social structure and *Kreng jai* value were the key advantages for asking teachers for their participation in my teaching project. Culturally, teachers often responded positively and politely accepted although some of them did not

desire to change their teaching practices. Whilst it gave a good opportunity to start working on my project, hierarchical social structure and Kreng jai value, at the same time, caused avoidance to express their 'real feeling' of perception to Intensive Interaction. At this stage of work, the expression of some teachers to the experience of Intensive Interaction was not positive but they reported it to be so in short replies such as 'it's OK'.

Later, I reduced the hierarchical gap between the teachers and myself, via calling myself 'Pee' (older sister), adding the word 'Ka' at the end of the sentence for politeness, and trying to keep myself in the same position as them, such as not sitting higher than them (on the teacher's chair they prepared) or allowing myself to sit comfortably on the floor in their classroom. The gap of hierarchical position between us was reduced and our familiarity became evident. In the process of developing teacher education and encouraging them to work in a new way, I used both Thai traditional methods (didactic, with which they were familiar) and an experimenting approach (learning by doing) and allowing them to observe my teaching session (self-modelling), which were unfamiliar to them. The experimenting approach facilitated the teachers in exploring their own learning, and self-modelling allowed them to observe and comment on my Intensive Interaction teaching. This way of teaching empowered the teachers and increased their confidence to express their real feeling towards Intensive Interaction by their own judgement.

From this stage, some teachers, who were keen on Intensive Interaction from the beginning, suggested that I formally place Intensive Interaction in learning activities and monitor seriously it with every teacher. For some teachers, who concealed negative feelings at the first stage, they revealed different perceptions, challenged questions, and disagreed with some principles of Intensive Interaction.

To retain a good relationship, other cultural aspects were also applied to work. For instance, I employed collective characteristics where the

relationship as a family was a priority and this led to work-collaboration and achievement at the end. Also, the celebration of the spirit of work (party) to encourage them was arranged occasionally with the support of their directors. Using many elements of Thai culture I was able to know the real feelings and their viewpoints and still retain in a good understanding and relationship amongst us.

Importantly, engaging the teachers in a pedagogical approach did not depend only on Thai culture. The most important aspect to motivate some teachers to volunteer and continually use a new pedagogy was the power of Intensive Interaction itself, such as instinctive knowledge, versatility and fun. Also, support from the school directors following the policy of child-centred learning already addressed in Thai educational reform system played a role. Therefore, the combination of these components: Thai culture, the power of Intensive Interaction and the policy system, supported each other for working well in the unfamiliar pedagogy of Intensive Interaction in the Thai cultural context.

What happened was some teachers completely changed, some realised and partly developed their pedagogies, and some increased their knowledge but preferred the traditional method. The most important aspect was that the introduction of Intensive Interaction provided the freedom to the teachers who used to be criticised about using fun-play with equal body position to build a relationship with their pupils.

## **Contribution to Knowledge**

This research has made contributions to the existing knowledge in the following facets.

First, the research focused on how Thai cultural context influenced the implementation of Intensive Interaction. It provided a theoretical understanding of Thai contextual effects that the Thai teachers had in their experiences of Intensive Interaction implementation. The findings have made a contribution for the practitioners and all involved in caring for children with autism and SLD. The positive outcome of Intensive Interaction in relation to fundamental communication for children with autism and SLD will be helpful for parents and practitioners who would like to turn away from applying behavioural approaches for developing communication and language abilities to child-directed learning in which play was central.

Second, the findings may benefit schools and educational Institutions that are interested in approaches applying child-centred principles to social-communicative development, such as Intensive Interaction, and would like to seek practitioners' perceptions before adopting them within school systems.

Third, the findings will be useful for teacher educators in many universities which set a course of special education as a compulsory subject for teacher-students. Particularly significant here are Rajabhat Universities (as mentioned in chapter one) as these universities deliver bachelor degree programmes in special education in which a behavioural approach is the only technique for special education teacher training. The positive outcome of Intensive Interaction may be an option for some teacher educators in those universities that can add this approach to special education teacher training programmes. The cultural barriers found in these findings may create consideration and understanding to teacher educators and student teachers.

Fourth, the research may be of benefit to the Thai Higher Education Commission and the Thai government agency. Since the principles adopted by Intensive Interaction are those the Thai government addressed in the educational policy with the intention of encouraging their implementation throughout the Thai educational system, some key cultural aspects found in these findings can inform the significant barriers for moving Thailand in that direction. It is necessary that the Thai government should be aware of and

understand the cultural barriers that have an impact on, and can even be an obstacle to, this policy and seek the way to negotiate or overcome them. In this study, the recommendations for negotiating between the philosophies in relation to child-centred learning from the West and the Thai culture are proposed in the implications.

Fifth, the research results have generated a greater evidential base of Intensive Interaction research telling stories amongst Thai educators from the eastern culture background. The research findings revealed both sides of the effectiveness and the challenges of Intensive Interaction when implemented in a different cultural background. The findings may add to the Intensive Interaction community and have a practical impact.

The following section offers implications. The implication for pupil learning is solely based on implementing Intensive Interaction in this research. Implications for teacher education and for policy makers are drawn from both these research results and from the existing evidence about the recommendations for the development of educational reform in Thailand.

## **Implications for Pupil Learning: Action for Special Education Schools**

In this study, the increased abilities and potential of the pupils that appeared in the teachers' observations should be considered as issues for reappraisal about the appropriate curriculum for developing pupils with autism and SLD. This research advocates that the earliest fundamental communication ability should be a priority in educational planning for the development of these pupils, and others, especially where pre-academic subjects should be a subordinate aim.

This study strongly indicates that the teaching approach to social-communication and language abilities for pupil with autism and SLD



should shift from directive or pre-planned object-outcome based teaching controlled and led by teachers based on behavioural theory. Instead, a process-based educational curriculum, such as Intensive Interaction, for development derived from the theories of interactive and responsive approach, and social constructivism should be used. This fits with current government policy.

Although it is beyond the scope of this study, it should be noted that resource issues were important. Most teachers felt the high child/staff ratio hindered their ability to use Intensive Interaction with the children. They also had suggestions about how, by re-organising the learning schedule in schools, they could improve their effectiveness. For instance, they suggested dividing working hours into two groups, with the first group from 8:30-11:00 and the second group from 13:00-15:30, and reducing the teacher's routine work of caring for pupils, such as feeding, bathing, dressing and sleeping. This would improve the educational possibilities. It may allow the teacher to develop an interactive play-based curriculum as the teachers in this study suggested.

Parent training should be considered as collaboration with the teacher for developing earlier fundamental communication in pupils with autism and SLD. This may help pupils make good progress and reduce regression during a long school holiday. Also, it may be helpful to build a good understanding between parents and teachers in applying interactive play toward a child's learning and development, which is an unfamiliar concept for parents. This also reduces the tension of teachers from the perspectives of teachers and outsiders who may not consider play as a means of teaching and developing a child.

## Implications for Teacher Education: Action for Rajabhat Universities

The pre-service special education teacher needs to have an understanding about the importance of the development of fundamental social and communication abilities for children with autism and SLD. They should also be trained in teaching fundamental social and communication abilities that apply the knowledge of normal language development in mother-infant interaction or theory of language acquisition. This knowledge has significance for educational curricula for pre-service teachers as they should be aware that the education of pupils with autism and SLD should go far enough back to this basic theory, which Intensive Interaction has adopted, to develop learning with understanding in these pupils.

Since the knowledge of mother-infant interaction for developing social and language abilities derives from multi-principles, such as responsive teaching approach, interactive play, social construction and child-centred learning, pre-service special education teachers should have knowledge and deep understanding of these theories. This should benefit by softening the rigidity of the teacher-controlled approach with the hierarchical social system, which has been ingrained in the Thai curriculum. Firmly placing these theories in the curriculum is the most significant aspect that would build and foster a new educational belief system. This knowledge will help pre-service special education teachers consider and understand their cultural barriers and the impact of their own culture. The appreciation of these fundamental principles and theories may be helpful for teachers to adjust their traditional values and assumptions and finally accept that a pupil can be an active learner who plays a significant part in constructing their learning.

The importance of play in child development should be articulated to pre-service special education teachers. It is necessary that the

knowledge and positive attitude to teaching through play be well established for teachers who teach pupils with autism and SLD who are in the earlier stage of development. This knowledge will also be important for the teachers to defend their knowledge and practice, and can explain this to Thai outsiders who may not deem play as the teaching tool for educational provision.

This study agrees with Pillay's (2002) arguments that pre-service teachers should have an opportunity to participate in 'international learning communities' and access innovations of pedagogies and research from outside the country. This will be helpful for narrowing a large gap between the knowledge and teaching practices from international countries and those that are practised in Thailand.

In order to facilitate independent critical thinking, personal inquiry and flexible thinking for the Thai teacher, which will support teachers in teaching with the theories suggested above, as suggested by Atagi (2002), the learning process in their training curriculum should give them an opportunity to learn from the learning-teaching model grounded in social constructivist perspectives. This learning process should be emphasised as being important for teacher training.

### **Implications for Policy Makers: Action for the Higher Education Commission and Thai Government**

The findings point to the need for the curriculum makers to improve teacher educators in the knowledge and teaching practice of current teaching innovation (responsive teaching approach, interactive play, social construction theory and child-centred learning). These principles and theories should be deeply understood and appreciated by teacher educators. This knowledge and skills should be provided to upgrade the teacher educators, especially teacher educators in

Rajabhat Universities, before they can offer training to teachers in current teaching approaches (Pillay, 2002).

Furthermore, the teacher educators need to consider and understand their own cultural barriers and the impact of current teaching approaches to their culture (Atagi, 2002). This will help them understand the interface between the traditional teaching approaches and the newer teaching approaches.

This study also supports Atagi's (2002) recommendation that besides transmitting by didactic approach, the teacher educators would benefit from training the teachers by the process of social constructivism theory, which is comprised of the principles, beliefs and cultures of child-centred education. The teacher educators should encourage the teacher to observe, practise, explore and reflect upon the current teaching approach and develop their own classroom practice.

The teacher educators need the introduction of the 'international best practices' and the related research and literature. Some key international literature in relation to current teaching innovation should be translated into Thai and disseminated to teacher educators and teachers (Pillay, 2002). This is necessary for special education subjects as there are approximately 20 books that teachers and teacher educators can access in Thai versions. I recommend books in relation to accessing communication for people with severe learning difficulties and/or autism. In accordance with Atagi (2002) and Pillay (2002), the knowledge in 'international best practices' will be significant for turning Thailand into a knowledge society and for reducing the large gaps between international pedagogies and local Thai teaching practices. However, as my study has demonstrated, embedding the understanding of new understandings needs to be undertaken within a carefully considered programme that takes into account the Thai cultural context.

## **Implication for Research:** The strengths and weaknesses of the research design and methods

This research offers a new knowledge co-constructed between practitioners actively participating in this research, and me as a facilitator and an insider researcher. Being an insider researcher provided me with 'insider knowledge' of the context of Thai culture, education and university system which was of great significance to me. This 'insider knowledge' allowed me recognise how to collaboratively work with Thai teachers, how to deal and negotiate with all involved with them in the teaching programme and, especially, how to discover their 'implicit meaning' (not the meaning that they actually meant in their speech), which was hard work. Having these valuable elements and an insider status knowing about the complexity of Thai characteristics, complex situations in Thai schools and the university system, enabled me to get access, generate trust, prolong engagement both in their personal life and pedagogical activities, and thus complete in-depth data collection. This work would have been almost impossible for an outsider researcher. I, however, adopted the use of the combination of a proper balance between insider and outsider positions and perspectives, which proposed the more critical and analytical abilities to sufficient data collection and the best possible understanding of the situation as discussed in the role of the researcher (chapter 5, p. 127-132).

Being an insider constantly allowed my participants and me to participate in a 'messy area', a place for the 'revealing of tacit or hidden theories, beliefs and realities that frame actions' (Cook, 2009, p. 287), and this facilitated the realisation of the meaning in the process of interpreting my participants' experience (Cook, 2009). The 'messy area' helped us co-create a 'local theory' that we tested out by acting on it. The 'local theory' was a context-bound explanation of 'why they do it in this way' in their own understandings and situations, which was the usefulness of the development of our teaching programme throughout the work (Cook, 2006). Further, this facilitated my participants and me to capture a dynamic process of change in their thinking, understanding and behaviour that emerged from the exchange of

experiences and perspectives –a ‘messy turn’, which is suggested as building rigour into a research process (Cook, 2009). This research process design, thus, achieved ‘catalytic validity’, which means ‘the degree to which the research process re-orient, focusses, and energizes participants [...] so that respondents gain self-understanding and, ideally, self-determination through research participation’ (Lather, 1986 p. 67). Applying my insider status in this research is, therefore, the rigour of interpretation –‘authentic’ to my participants’ truth, and the rigour of method –including ‘mess’ in seeking pluralities of truth (Cook, 2009), and to produce trustworthy knowledge.

As explained in chapter five (p.153) there was a cultural challenge in relation to knowledge exchange within a group of my participants due to the hierarchical nature of Thai social interaction; the creation of a ‘messy area’ in my study occurred most effectively when participants and I had one-to-one conversations or when I had conversations with two participants who had the same age. This research may have produced a deeper understanding of the exploration if I could have expanded the area of ‘mess’ with a whole group of participants. Group work may have had more impact for my participants regarding the development in their thinking and understanding enhanced by the learning from multiple experiences and perspectives of others, transforming their knowledge, and changing their practice (a ‘messy turn’). I had the intention to do this but found it did not work for a group of my participants.

## **Recommendation for further research**

More urban areas have different understandings and challenges. The data from this study are, however, sufficient in depth and triangulated to suggest that cultural issues are likely to permeate pedagogical understandings of teachers in Thailand. To develop further it needs more research into the perceptions of Intensive Interaction implementation, focusing on sharing the cultural aspects influencing the adoption of pedagogy from a different culture.

## **Personal Implication: What have I learnt in the journey of doing my doctoral dissertation?**

Doing my doctoral dissertation is one of the most rewarding learning experiences of my life. I have learnt and gained so many things through my engagement with this thesis. As mentioned in chapter one I came here with only my desire to do a thesis to improve the quality of life of children with autism and SLD that I have been so interested in. I did not have a clear thesis topic, good knowledge about methodology, and, even worse, I had poor English as well. It took time for me to find the topic I really liked. At first I was eager to use Intensive Interaction with children with autism and SLD to evaluate its effectiveness, but since it was not likely to contribute to new knowledge as mentioned in chapter one, I had to change. Actually, I felt disappointed because I would like to practise this approach with the pupils myself. But afterwards I recognised that the current topic advised to me by my supervisors was much better. I was really glad they guided me this way. The current thesis topic opens my world about pedagogy, my culture and my personal life.

At first I was not excited or eager to find out how my own culture was influenced by pedagogy from the West. What was my culture? What was interest in it? It was not easy for me to answer. I also believed that these questions were also hard for local Thai people to answer. Generally, Thai people may think that it is so easy to study about your own country and culture. But from my experience I can say that it is not easy at all. It is even a barrier to be Thai and research your own culture. We are ingrained in our culture as an insider who feels it is hard to answer those questions if we have not ever seen another culture. Although we may read it from books, it is not the same. It probably looks like we read about who children with autism are from a book and imagine their images—having difficulties with communication and language. I think we cannot imagine their true images from only reading a book. Luckily, I had an opportunity to stay in the UK

where there are many cultural aspects different from ours. Reading literature, interacting with people and watching their lifestyles from the television were helpful for me to understand cultural differences. This facilitated me to understand my own culture. Knowing culture allows me to understand more about people, not only Thai, but also those from western societies. I would not have this understanding if I did not leave my local community and come to be an outsider researching my culture around people in different cultures.

If I had done the old topic I would have gained only the teaching skills of Intensive Interaction. I might have tried to force the practitioners to match every element of Intensive Interaction and would not have learned the impact of our culture on the pedagogy. This is most likely to be a disadvantage when using this practice in the wider context. Researching this research topic opens my eyes to see the whole picture of the Thai educational system. The impacts of cultural barriers and enablers of the implementation of the child-led learning was found and understood. This is one of biggest changes to the education of children with autism and SLD in Thailand.

Researching the social reality of people through a way of qualitative philosophy was the most beneficial for me as well. What I have learnt from philosophy and culture completely changed me. Now I understand people very much more compared to the old me. I understand that people think in different ways from their own perspectives that accumulate from their interaction with and interpretation of the world. It is quite funny, isn't it? Why have I just learned this now? I am a local Thai who has been taught that we have to be in harmony or *samukkee*. We should think, feel and act in the same way as the majority, and should not think differently as it would harm love and *samukkee*. I have learnt the meaning of understanding from reading some parts of a book 'Being and time' (Heidegger, 1927/1962) -- the philosophy of interpretation. This book taught me to understand people, have empathy with them and although I do not agree with them, at least I can imagine what situation they are in and how they feel. It taught me to search for knowledge to increase my 'zone' to meet with the 'zone' of others and



understand people who think differently from us. I can accept that sometimes I cannot truly understand people, even though I know their culture, know some of their personality and am familiar with them. We are from different seed, soil, weather and water, so we become a different tree and therefore it is not wrong that the orange tree will be unable understand apple tree sometimes. I am patient and do not feel frustrated at being unable to understand others. Individual culture is so complicated. Before studying for a PhD, I tended to be frustrated at being unable to understand people. I always shouted from inside my heart “Why do they think like this, if I were them I would do it like this”. The knowledge from philosophy and culture broadened my world and it makes me steady and calm.

One may wonder that learning our own culture may over-simplify, stereotype ourselves and look only at different aspects. This is not true at all. For me, understanding culture helps me to understand myself, forgive myself and, to some extent, feel free from my culture. For instance, I believe less and less in *Vasana* – the good thing that we gained in current life, as a result of the good *karma* that we accumulated from previous life. Local Thais believe that what happens in our current life is fixed from our previous life as described in chapter three. I now believe in hard work instead.

I understand myself about the lack of critical thinking as well. Thai culture obstructed my critical thinking. Thais are obedient, avoid a confrontation and do not criticise. I tended to believe everything I read even though sometimes I doubted it. What was written in the books is the teacher in a ‘high place’ -- true, respected and uncriticised. I was taught since I was very young to pay respect or *Wai* to the book three times after reading it. Books were kept on a high shelf and we never walked across them. It was difficult to overcome this cultural aspect. Qualitative research requires critical thinking and argument. I have developed and done as much as I can to overcome my cultural background. Critical thinking also provides benefits to my personal life; I now observe and consider things from many sides and perspectives. Previously, I always saw things as either ‘white or black,’ and using my emotions I judged

and chose to stay on one side. Thinking critically helps me learn to live in 'shades of grey', instead of 'black and white', which means I do not home in on one idea and jump to a solid conclusion. Now, I understand my own perspective and can reduce my emotional decisions. This allows me to consider the perspective of others, which helps me come to a rational conclusion. Also, I have learnt to suspend my judgement sometimes and do not force myself in only one side of people. Learning as a doctor of philosophy has helped me to become an open-minded person and to live with and understand a diverse group of people.

Doing the doctoral dissertation has been the hardest thing in my life as well; I felt lots of pressure and it was painful. I am a mother living with my son and my husband who is also studying for a PhD and having back pain. Leaving my own mum in Thailand for a long time kills me. My mum really misses me and her grandson and wants me to go home. Sometimes she said "It is such a long time that I have to stay here, I am so old and maybe I cannot wait for you anymore", so we were both crying. But my mum is determined and does not want me to come back home until I reach my goal. I missed my sister's wedding. My brother [a business man] asked me 'Why do you have to do this thing for more than half a decade? Can you earn money from your doctor thing? Is it worth doing it?'

It is worth it, I can tell. I gain and properly grow from the intellectual learning experiences. Learning by doing in the PhD journey is the most rewarding aspect of my job and my personal life. I am sure I can bring an appropriate teaching practice for improving the quality of life of pupils with autism and SLD. I can be a better teacher to foster my teacher-students and teachers in Thailand to construct their own learning and support them to create their own teaching practice in their classroom. The most surprising part is that doing the PhD completely changed my way of thinking. Before I came here I thought gaining a doctoral degree would make me bigger and more important. This is a desirable quality to live proudly in my country where it is thought the bigger, the happier. What I have learnt and gained is completely

different. Now I am shaped to shift from self-centredness and move to being small. 'The beauty of being small' is one of the most rewarding intellectual experiences from doing my doctoral dissertation.

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# Appendices

## Appendix I: Letter of Ethical Approval for Northumbria University Committee.

School of Health, Community and Education Studies  
Postgraduate and Research Support Office  
Room H007  
Coach Lane Campus East  
Newcastle upon Tyne NE7 7XA

Tel: 0191 215 6276  
Fax: 0191 215 6605  
loma.kennedy@unn.ac.uk

9 September 2008

Rungrat Sri-Amnuay  
Faculty of Education  
Nakhon Rachasima Rajabhat University  
340 Suranarai Road  
Naimuang  
Nakhon Ratchasima 30000  
Thailand

Dear Rungrat

**School of HCES Research Ethics Sub Committee**

**Title: Teachers' Perceptions of Intensive Interaction for Teaching Students with Autism and/or Severe Learning Difficulties: The practical application of the approach to developing practice in the Thai Context.**

Following independent peer review of the above proposal, I am pleased to inform you that University approval has been granted on the basis of this proposal and that the University Policies on Ethics and Consent are followed.

You may now also proceed with your application (if applicable) to:

- NHS R&D organisations for Trust approval where appropriate.
- Research Ethics Committee (REC). [Please forward a copy of this letter where appropriate plus the peer review comments and your response to those comments].

**Please notify the University once you obtain REC favourable opinion.**

**IMPORTANT: PLEASE FORWARD A COPY OF YOUR REC APPROVAL LETTER TO THE ABOVE ADDRESS.**

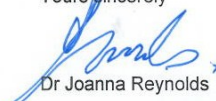
- Where appropriate you will also need honorary contract(s) with Trusts. **Please forward a copy of any agreed honorary contracts to the above address.**
- Note that occupational health and criminal records bureau clearance will also be required if working with children or vulnerable adults.

**All researchers must also notify this office of the following:**

- Commencement of the study;
- Actual completion date of the study;
- Any significant changes to the study design;
- Any incidents which have an adverse effect on participants, researchers or study outcomes;
- Any suspension or abandonment of the study;
- All funding, awards and grants pertaining to this study, whether commercial or non-commercial;
- All publications and/or conference presentations of the findings of the study.

We wish you well in your research endeavours.

Yours sincerely



Dr Joanna Reynolds

## Appendix II: 2-Day Intensive Interaction Training Schedule

### Training Programme Schedule: Intensive Interaction

#### Day 1

**Time 9:00 am – 6:00 pm**

<b>Sessions</b>	<b>Time</b>
Opening	9:00 – 9:15 am.
Aims of training programme	9:15 – 9:30 am.
What is Intensive Interaction?	9:30– 9:45 am.
Who is it for?	9:45–10:00 am
The fundamentals of communication	10:00–10:30 am.
<b>Break</b>	<b>10:30 – 10:45 am.</b>
The principle of Intensive Interaction	10:45 – 12:00 am.
Valuing the process	
Respect, negotiation and participation	
<b>Lunch</b>	<b>12:00 – 13:00 pm.</b>
The theoretical background of Intensive Interaction	13:00 – 14:30 pm.
The principles of the parent interaction style with babies	
<b>Break</b>	<b>1 4:30 – 14:45 pm.</b>
Applying the principles with people with SLD and/or autism.	14:45 – 16:00 pm.
Mutual pleasure, Interpersonal Behaviours, Timing, Intentionality, Contingent responding	

## **Day 2**

**Time 9:00 am – 6:00 pm**

### **Sessions**

### **Time**

How to do Intensive Interaction

9:00 -10:30 am

- Starting Intensive Interaction
- Intensive Interaction DVD.

### **Break**

**10:30 – 10:45 am.**

Being responsive

10:45 - 12:00 am.

- Imitation, Turn-taking, Pause and The role of touch
- Interactive games
- Thai songs

### **Lunch**

**12:00 – 13:00 pm.**

Role play

13:00 - 14:00 pm.

How to develop Intensive Interaction

14:00- 14:30 pm.

- Moving on from responding to everything

### **Break**

**14:30 – 14:45 pm.**

Certification award and Closing ceremony

14:45 – 16:00 pm.

## รายละเอียดการอบรม: Intensive Interaction

### วันที่ ๑

เวลา ๘.๐๐-๑๖.๐๐ น.

กิจกรรม	เวลา
พิธีเปิด	๐๘.๐๐-๐๘.๑๕ น.
วัตถุประสงค์ของการอบรม	๐๘.๑๕-๐๘.๓๐ น.
Intensive Interaction คืออะไร	๐๘.๓๐-๐๘.๔๕ น.
Intensive Interaction มีจุดมุ่งหมายเพื่อใคร	๐๘.๔๕-๑๐.๐๐ น.
พื้นฐานสำคัญของการสื่อสาร	๑๐.๐๐-๑๐.๓๐ น.
พัก	๑๐.๓๐-๑๐.๔๕ น.
หลักการของ Intensive Interaction	๑๐.๔๕-๑๒.๐๐ น.
คุณค่าของกระบวนการ	
การเคารพ การเจรจา และ การมีส่วนร่วม (ประนีประนอม)	
พักรับประทานอาหาร	๑๒- ๐๐. ๑๓ ๐๐.น.
ภูมิหลังความเชื่อของ Intensive Interaction	๑๓- ๐๐. ๑๔.๓๐ น.
หลักการของรูปแบบการมีปฏิสัมพันธ์ระหว่างแม่กับลูก(วัยทารก)	
พัก	๑๔.๓๐-๑๔.๔๕ น.
การประยุกต์หลักการเพื่อใช้กับเด็กออทิสติกและSLD.	๑๔.๔๕-๑๖.๐๐ น.
Intentionality, ความพึงพอใจซึ่งกันและกัน, การตอบสนองแบบทันที	

## วันที่ ๒

เวลา ๙.๐๐-๑๖.๐๐ น.

### กิจกรรม

### เวลา

จะสอนแบบ Intensive Interaction ได้อย่างไร

๐๙.๐๐- ๑๐.๓๐.น.

- เริ่มต้น Intensive Interaction
- ฉาย DVD Intensive Interaction.

### พัก

๑๐.๓๐-๑๐.๔๕ น.

การเป็นผู้ตอบสนอง

๑๐.๔๕- ๑๒.๐๐.น.

- การเลียนแบบ, การพลัดเปลี่ยน, การหยุดชั่วขณะ และ บทบาทของการสัมผัส
- เกมปฏิสัมพันธ์
- เพลงไทย

พักรับประทานอาหารกลางวัน

๑๒.๐๐-๑๓.๐๐.น.

บทบาทสมมติ

๑๓.๐๐-๑๔.๐๐น.

- จะพัฒนา Intensive Interaction ได้อย่างไร

๑๔.๐๐-๑๔.๓๐น.

การย้ายออกจากการตอบสนองไปสู่ทุกอย่าง

### พัก

๑๔.๓๐-๑๔.๔๕ น.

การมอบประกาศนียบัตรและพิธีปิด

๑๔.๔๕-๑๖.๐๐ น.



### Appendix III: Letter Requesting Permission to Conduct Research Study in Nakhon Rachasima Rajabhat University with Thai Version



Title Letter of Requesting for Permission to Conduct Research Study

To President of Nakhon Rachasima Rajabhat University

Attachment: Detailed information of the research project

I am Rungrat Sriamnuay, a lecturer of Special Education Programme, Faculty of Education, Nakhon Rachasima Rajabhat University, attending PhD. programme (Special education) at The University of Northumbria at Newcastle Upon Tyne, UK, I am requesting permission to conduct my research study at Special Education Centre of Nakhon Rachasima Rajabhat University.

My thesis topic is "Perceptions of Teaching Pre-verbal Pupils with Autism and Severe Learning Difficulties: Factors Influencing the Application of Intensive Interaction in the Thai Culture " The thesis is under supervision of Dr. Tina Cook and Dr. Colin Chandler, School of Health, Community and Education Studies, The University of Northumbria at Newcastle upon Tyne, Newcastle Upon Tyne, UK.

The thesis is funded by Thai Government. I would very appreciate it if you could grant my request. The data collection period will take between March 1st and 30th September 2008 as the information detailed in attachment.

Grateful for your consideration,  
Sincerely yours,

.....  
Mrs. Rungrat Sri-amnuay

Researcher

## **The Detail of Data Collection in the Research Study**

**Thesis topic:** Perceptions of Teaching Pre-verbal Pupils with Autism and Severe Learning Difficulties: Factors Influencing the Application of Intensive Interaction in the Thai Culture

### **Aims of research study**

To understand teachers' perceptions of using a new teaching approach called Intensive Interaction approach and to find out the effective way for promoting Intensive Interaction approach in Thailand. The study proposes three research settings as follows:

1. Special education centre at Nakhon Rachasima Rajabhat University
2. Special education centre region 11
3. Special education school

### **Benefits of the research study**

1. Teachers will get knowledge and teaching practice of Intensive Interaction approach which never implemented in Thailand.
2. Intensive Interaction will be evaluated if it is an effective approach to apply for Thai teachers who have the belief about disabilities and the communicative way with student with SEN different from that of those who originate this approach.
3. The practical application of this approach will be adapted to the Thai context.

To collect data I would like to ask for permission to use the conference room in Special education centre in order to arrange 1) A 3 day training course for 25 teachers 2) Half-day workshop for 10 teachers 3) Focus group interviews. The half-day workshop will be held every month, and will take 6 months during conducting the research study.

The data collection period will take between 1st March and 30th September 2008

## Appendix IV: Letter for Allowing to Conduct Research Study in Nakhon Rachasima Rajabhat University with Thai Version

Government Sector: Special Education Program, Faculty of Education.

Code: 5195/50 Date.....

Title Letter of Requesting for Permission to Conduct Research Study

To President of Nakhon Rachasima Rajabhat University

Mrs. Rungrat Siamnuay, a lecturer of Special Education Programme, Faculty of Education, Nakhon Rachasima Rajabhat University, is attending PhD. programme (Special education) at The University of Northumbria at Newcastle Upon Tyne, UK, conducting thesis on "Perceptions of Teaching Pre-verbal Pupils with Autism and Severe Learning Difficulties: Factors Influencing the Application of Intensive Interaction in the Thai Culture" She is requesting to conduct her research study at Special Education Centre of Nakhon Rachasima Rajabhat University by sending a letter of requesting for permission via electronic mail.

I, therefore, would like to forward this letter to the President as Mrs. Rungrat Siamnuay has requested.

For consideration,

.....

(Dr. Siriluk Prongsantai)

Head of Special Education Programme

To President

Please grant her request

**Permission is granted.**

**On December, 28th 2007**

(Dr. Suntaree Siri-angkul)

Dean of Faculty of Education

26 December 2007

Dr. Saowanit Saowananoon

President of University



## บันทึกข้อความ

ส่วนราชการ โปรแกรมวิชาการศึกษาศาสตร์ มหาวิทยาลัยราชภัฏนครราชสีมา โทร. ๑๑๑๐

ที่..... วันที่ ๒๖ ธันวาคม ๒๕๕๐

เรื่อง นำเรียนเสนอหนังสือขออนุญาตเก็บข้อมูลเพื่อการวิจัย

เรียน อธิการบดี

ด้วยนางรุ่งรัตน์ ศรีอำนวย อาจารย์โปรแกรมวิชาการศึกษาศาสตร์ คณะครุศาสตร์ มหาวิทยาลัยราชภัฏนครราชสีมา กำลังศึกษาปริญญาเอกทางการศึกษา ที่มหาวิทยาลัยนอร์ทแทมเพรีย์ ประเทศอังกฤษ กำลังทำวิทยานิพนธ์เรื่อง "การรับรู้ของครูที่ใช้วิธี Intensive Interaction สอนเด็กที่มีความลำบากในการเรียนรู้ขั้นรุนแรง และเด็กออทิสติก: ผลของการปฏิบัติเพื่อพัฒนากระบวนการสอนแบบ Intensive Interaction ในบริบทไทย" (Teachers' Perceptions of Intensive Interaction for Teaching Students with Autism and Severe Learning Difficulties: The practical application of the approach to developing practice in the Thai context) ได้ติดต่อขอความอนุเคราะห์มายังศูนย์การศึกษาศาสตร์ เพื่อขออนุญาตเก็บข้อมูลเกี่ยวกับการจัดการศึกษาในศูนย์การศึกษาศาสตร์ คณะครุศาสตร์ มหาวิทยาลัยราชภัฏนครราชสีมา โดยได้ส่งหนังสือขออนุญาตเก็บข้อมูลจากประเทศอังกฤษมาทางจดหมายอิเล็กทรอนิกส์

ดังนั้น ข้าพเจ้าจึงใคร่ขอนำเรียนเสนอหนังสือดังกล่าวต่อท่านอธิการบดี ตามที่นางรุ่งรัตน์ ศรีอำนวย ประสานขอความอนุเคราะห์มา

จึงเรียนมาเพื่อโปรดพิจารณา

(ดร.สิริลักษณ์ โปร่งสันเทียะ)

ประธานโปรแกรมวิชาการศึกษาศาสตร์

ใน อธิการบดี  
เพื่อไม่ติดขัดการขอ

(ดร.สุนทรี ศิริอังกูร)  
คณบดีคณะครุศาสตร์  
26 ธ.ค. 2550

๒๖ ธ.ค.

2008

## Appendix V: Invitation Letter for Thai Schools with Thai Version



University of Northumbria at Newcastle

School of Health, Community and  
Education Studies, Coach Lane  
Campus East Benton,  
Newcastle upon Tyne, NE7 7XA  
<http://northumbria.ac.uk>

To The Director of xxx

Subject: Training Programme Schedule: Intensive Interaction

I write to you to inform that I am pleased to invite teachers in your school to attend in a training course. The training course will talk about a teaching approach called Intensive Interaction for working with students with severe learning difficulties (SLD) and /or autism. Intensive interaction is a new teaching approach originated in United Kingdom and never implemented in Thailand. This approach is to teaching the communication to children and adults who have SLD and/or autism and who are still at an early stage of communication development.

The training course will take 3 days at Special Education Centre, Nakhon Ratchasima Rajabhat University (NRRU) on 1-3 July 2008. Please find attached the detailed course schedule. I invite you to nominate 6 teachers who have student with SLD and /or autism from your school to attend and learn about the practical application of this teaching approach. The course will be led by Mrs. Rungrat Sri-amnuay: Lecturer of special education programme at NRRU studying PhD. Programme at University of Northumbria at Newcastle upon Tyne, UK.

I hope you will be interested in this training course and would be participate. I would be grateful if you could confirm your participation and hand the registration form to the person you would like to choose for the training course. This training course is free of charge and will also offer refreshment and lunch for all attendants.

Thank you for your interest and we look forward to carrying a training course.

Sincerely yours,

.....

Head of Special Education Programme

University of Northumbria at Newcastle

School of Health, Community and  
Education Studies, Coach Lane  
Campus East Benton,  
Newcastle upon Tyne, NE7 7XA  
<http://northumbria.ac.uk>

### หนังสือขอเรียนเชิญบุคลากรครูเข้าร่วมรับการอบรม

วันที่.....

เรียน .....

โปรแกรมวิชาการศึกษาศาสตร์ คณะครุศาสตร์ มหาวิทยาลัยราชภัฏนครราชสีมา มีความประสงค์จะขอเชิญ  
ครูในศูนย์ การศึกษาพิเศษของท่านจำนวน ๖ ท่าน เข้าร่วมการอบรมเชิงปฏิบัติการ เรื่องกระบวนการสอน  
แบบ **Intensive Interaction** ซึ่งเป็นวิธีการสอนหลักการสอนสำหรับเด็กที่มีความยากลำบาก  
ในการเรียนรู้ขั้นรุนแรง และ/หรือ เด็กที่มีอาการออทิสซึม และผู้ที่พัฒนาการทางการสื่อสาร อยู่ในขั้นก่อนการ  
มีภาษาพูด การอบรมจะจัดที่ห้องประชุม การศึกษาพิเศษ ชั้น ๓ ศูนย์การศึกษาพิเศษ คณะครุศาสตร์  
มหาวิทยาลัยราชภัฏนครราชสีมา การอบรมจะใช้เวลา ๓ วัน คือตั้งแต่วันที่ ๑-๓ กรกฎาคม พ.ศ. ๒๕๕๑  
ตามตารางการอบรม ที่ได้แนบมาพร้อมกับหนังสือเชิญนี้ การอบรมจะนำโดย นางรุ่งรัตน์ ศรีอำนวย  
ซึ่งปัจจุบันกำลังศึกษาปริญญาเอกทางการศึกษาพิเศษ อยู่ที่มหาวิทยาลัยนอร์ทแทมเบอรี ประเทศอังกฤษ  
และกำลังทำวิทยานิพนธ์เรื่อง “การรับรู้ของครูที่ใช้วิธี **Intensive Interaction** สอนเด็กที่มีความยากลำบาก  
ในการเรียนรู้ ขั้นรุนแรงและเด็กออทิสติก: ผลของการปฏิบัติเพื่อพัฒนากระบวนการสอนแบบ **Intensive  
Interaction** ในบริบทไทย

ดังนั้นจึงขอเรียนเชิญท่านผู้อำนวยการส่งรายนามครูผู้สนใจต้องการเข้าร่วมอบรม จำนวน ๖ ท่าน ผู้ซึ่งกำลัง  
สอนเด็กที่มี ความยากลำบากในการเรียนรู้ขั้นรุนแรง และ/หรือเด็กที่มีอาการออทิสซึม ผู้ที่พัฒนาการทางการ  
สื่อสาร อยู่ในขั้นก่อนการมี ภาษาพูด หวังเป็นอย่างยิ่งว่าท่านจะสนใจการอบรมนี้และ สามารถส่งบุคลากร  
เข้าร่วมได้ การอบรมครั้งนี้ไม่เก็บค่าลง ทะเบียน พร้อมทั้งจะจัดอาหารว่าง และอาหารกลางวันทั้ง ๒ วัน

ขอขอบคุณสำหรับการพิจารณา และหวังเป็นอย่างยิ่งว่าจะได้จัดการอบรมให้ท่าน

ขอแสดงความนับถือ

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หัวหน้าโปรแกรมวิชาการศึกษาศาสตร์

## Appendix VI: Information Sheet for Thai Teachers with Thai Version



University of Northumbria at Newcastle

School of Health, Community and  
Education Studies, Coach Lane  
Campus East Benton, Newcastle upon Tyne,  
NE7 7XA <http://northumbria.ac.uk>

### INFORMATION SHEET FOR TEACHER

Dear teacher

Thank you for your interest in developing learning and teaching for student with severe learning difficulties and/or autism. We are interested in using a new teaching approach called Intensive Interaction for better developing with the Thai context. **You are being invited to take part in a research project** because you have already completed the 3 day of training course and are a keen teacher who will be an important partner in this research. Your story of Intensive Interaction practice can add to knowledge about effective teaching approach development. This is research project being carried out by Rungrat Sri-amnuay as a PhD's thesis at University of Northumbria at Newcastle upon Tyne under the supervision of Dr Tina Cook and Dr Colin Chandler. This study has been reviewed and given favourable opinion by the Research Ethics Sub Committee to protect your safety, rights, wellbeing and dignity. The research's sponsor is The Royal Thai Government.

To help you decide whether this project is a good practice for you and your student, this information sheet offers a complete explanation of what's involved. So please read this sheet carefully. If you have any question or would like more information, please ask me at 07805884164 or at Special Education Centre, Nakhon Ratchasima Rajabhat University (NRRU) at 044 272942 or at my email address: [rungrat.sri-amnuay@unn.ac.uk](mailto:rungrat.sri-amnuay@unn.ac.uk)

We hope you find the project interesting and would like to join us. We believe this will be a professionally valuable and fun journey that benefits everyone involved: students, parents, teachers, and researcher.

Thank you for your time and consideration

Rungrat Sri-Amnuay

**Study title**

Perceptions of Teaching Pre-verbal Pupils with Autism and Severe Learning Difficulties: Factors Influencing the Application of Intensive Interaction in the Thai Culture

**What is Intensive Interaction?**

Intensive interaction (I.I.) is a new teaching approach originated in United Kingdom and never implemented in Thailand. This approach is to teaching the communication to children and adults who have severe learning difficulties (SLD) and/or autism and who are still at an early stage of communication development. The teaching approach is based on the model of caregiver-infant interaction in the first year and uses of caregivers' playful style in the interactive process. The style of Intensive Interaction stresses a child-directed educational model. The kind of interaction starts from trying to engage with a child from a child's perspective, from what a child is interested in, or from a child's behaviour.

**What is the purpose and results of the study?**

I am finding out what experiences you have whilst using I.I. approach. Your story will help define the degree of success of I.I. approach when used in the Thai context. The aim is to use your information to develop I.I. approach more appropriate for learning and teaching student with SLD and/or autism in the Thai context. The research results may develop a new support intervention that fit with present educational policy.

**What will happen to me if I take part?**

If you agree to be in this study, you are expected to do as follow:

1. Before you begin to use I.I., you will be invited for interview about your current perceptions of pedagogy. The duration of interview will be approximately 30-50 minutes and take place in your own workplace after school time. The interview will be taped.
2. During the 6-month research project you will be expected to use I.I. practice working with your student. Once a month at school time we will visit you to watch your teaching with the consented student in order to share knowledge and give advices if you wish to. It will be 20-40 minutes and be carried out individually.



3. Once a month after school time you will be interviewed to find out about your perception during the process of adoption of I.I. practice. It will take 40-50 minutes and be performed at your work setting. The interview will be taped.
4. Once a month at school time you will be expected to take part in half-day workshop with other participants and the researcher. These workshops aim to facilitate an exchange of information about I.I. practices amongst all of participants and will be held at Nakhon Ratchasima Rajabhat University (NRRU). Totally, 6 workshops will be carried out in this research project and recorded on video tape recorder.
5. At the end of the 6-month project, at school time, you will be invited to participate in focus group interview to give your overall experience of the use of I.I. during a 6-month period. The focus group interview will be led by a co-researcher who not involved in the 6-month project. Each group interview will be a team of teachers working together at the same place. The duration of each group interview will be approximately 1-2 hours and recorded onto audio tape. If you feel uncomfortable to talk in the group the co-researcher will arrange an individual interview for you. After completing focus group interviews, if you would like to look your own data in group interview the co-researcher will transcribe tape recorded and give them to you to check accuracy.

#### **Will I be paid to take part in this study?**

You will get 200 Baht for travel expense for every workshop and focus group interview, so the payment will be 1,400 Baht. All of you will be offered refreshment and lunch during the workshops and focus group interview. Certificate for participation in this research will be awarded to you if you totally take part throughout the research period.

#### **What are the possible benefits if I take part?**

The benefits to you of this research relate to improving the knowledge and teaching skills for your professional career. This study does not aim to evaluate your teaching performance. We hope to use information from this study to develop I.I. more appropriate for learning and teaching future students with SLD and/or autism in the Thai context. We believe there is no foreseeable risk in participation in this project to you and your students.

**What will happen if I don't want to carry on with the study?**

You do not have to take part in the research study and this will not affect you on your current or future relationship with the researcher or every aspect. If you decide to take part in, your participation is voluntary, and you are free to refuse to do any activity or answer any of the questions that may make you uncomfortable. You may decide to quit from the study at any time, without giving a reason and without effecting of your relations with the university, job, benefits, etc. If you withdraw from the study, we will need to use the data collected up to your withdrawal, but it will be reported only in summary form so that the individuals cannot be identified.

**Will my taking part in this study be kept confidential?**

All Information which is collected about you during the research project will be kept strictly confidential. However, we cannot guarantee the confidentiality for information which might be disclosed in the group interviews. Please feel free to tell me if you would not like to be in group interview, we will be pleased to arrange an individual interview for you and so your records will be kept privately. If the information you provide is reported or published, this will be done in a way that does not identify your identity. Prior to presenting research report any direct quotes or descriptions of your actions will be taken back to you for your final check of the accuracy of its contents and we will again ask for your permission. Your names and settings will be protected by the use of pseudonyms.

**Contact Details: For any concern about the research study.**

If you are worried about anything of this study, I will be happy to speak with you and will do my best to answer your questions. Please ask me by calling

at the number provided above or e-mailing me at the above address. If you have any concern over time about the study, you may also contact either of my two supervisors: Dr. Tina Cook at tina.[cook@unn.ac.uk](mailto:cook@unn.ac.uk) or Dr. Colin Chandler at [colin.chandler@unn.ac.uk](mailto:colin.chandler@unn.ac.uk)

Tel: 0044-191- 215 6269 [Dr. Tina Cook ]

Address: University of Northumbria at Newcastle upon Tyne.

School of Health, Community and Education Studies,

Coach Lane Campus,

Newcastle upon Tyne, NE7 7XA

Further guidance for participants

Websites <http://www.intensiveinteraction.co.uk>

<http://www.leedsmentalhealth.nhs.uk/ldservices/intensiveinteraction.cfm>

Books on Intensive Interaction

Nind, M. and Hewett, D. (1995) 'Access to Communication: Developing the basics of communication with people with severe learning difficulties through intensive Interaction', David Fulton Publishers, London.

Nind, M. and Hewett, D. (1998) 'Interaction in Action: Reflections on the use of Intensive Interaction', David Fulton Publishers, London.

Nind, M. and Hewett, D. (2001) 'A Practical Guide to Interaction in Action', BILD Publications.

.....  
*Thank you for taking the time to read this, and for your help. To show that you have agreed, please sign the consent form.*

University of Northumbria at Newcastle

School of Health, Community and  
Education Studies, Coach Lane  
Campus East Benton,  
Newcastle upon Tyne, NE7 7XA  
<http://northumbria.ac.uk>

### เอกสารให้ข้อมูลการวิจัยสำหรับครู

วันที่.....

เรียน เพื่อนร่วมงานทุกท่าน

ขอขอบคุณทุกท่าน ที่สนใจเกี่ยวกับการพัฒนาการเรียนและการสอน สำหรับเด็กที่มีความยากลำบากในการเรียนรู้ขั้นรุนแรงและ/หรือมีอาการออทิสซึม ผู้วิจัยกำลังสนใจวิธีการสอนแบบใหม่ที่เรียกว่า **Intensive Interaction** และต้องการ จะพัฒนาวิธีการสอนนี้ในบริบทไทย ผู้วิจัยปรารถนาจะ เชิญคุณเข้าร่วมในงานวิจัย เนื่องจากคุณได้ผ่านการอบรม ๓ วัน ในเรื่องการสอนแบบ **Intensive Interaction** แล้ว และเนื่องจากคุณเป็นคนที่กระตือรือร้น ผู้ซึ่งจะเป็นทีมงาน ที่สำคัญในการวิจัยครั้งนี้ ข้อมูลที่จะได้จากคุณ และการตอบสนองของเด็ก จะช่วยพัฒนาประสิทธิภาพของวิธีการสอน แบบใหม่นี้ ผู้ดำเนินโครงการวิจัยนี้คือ นางรุ่งรัตน์ ศรีอานวย ซึ่งขณะนี้กำลังศึกษาปริญญาเอกอยู่ที่ มหาวิทยาลัย นอร์ธัมเบรีย ประเทศอังกฤษ ภายใต้การให้คำปรึกษาของ Dr. Tina Cook และ Dr. Colin Chandler งานวิจัยได้ผ่านการตรวจสอบและให้ความเห็นชอบ โดยคณะกรรมการตรวจสอบคุณธรรมและจริยธรรมของผู้วิจัยแล้ว ซึ่งจะ ปกป้องความปลอดภัย สิทธิ สวัสดิภาพ และศักดิ์ศรีความเป็นมนุษย์ของผู้เข้าร่วมงานวิจัย โครงการวิจัยได้รับการ สนับสนุน จากรัฐบาลไทย ในหน่วยงานคณะกรรมการการอุดมศึกษา

เพื่อที่จะช่วยใน การตัดสินใจ ของท่านว่า โครงการนี้เป็นการปฏิบัติการสอนที่ดี สำหรับท่านและนักเรียนของท่านหรือไม่ เอกสารข้อมูลฉบับนี้ได้เสนอการ อธิบาย อย่างละเอียดของสิ่งที่เกี่ยวข้อง ดังนั้นกรุณาอ่านเอกสารนี้อย่างละเอียด ถ้าท่านมีคำถามหรือต้องการข้อมูลเพิ่มเติม กรุณาถามผู้วิจัยได้ที่เบอร์โทรศัพท์ 07805884164 หรือที่ศูนย์การศึกษาพิเศษ มหาวิทยาลัยราชภัฏนครราชสีมา 044272942 หรืออีเมล: [rungrat.sri-amnuay@unn.ac.uk](mailto:rungrat.sri-amnuay@unn.ac.uk)

ผู้วิจัยหวังว่าท่านจะพบว่าโครงการนี้เป็นประโยชน์ และต้องการจะเข้าร่วมกับเรา ผู้วิจัยเชื่อว่างานโครงการนี้ จะเป็น การ เดินทางที่สนุกและมีคุณค่าทางวิชาชีพ ที่จะเป็นประโยชน์ ต่อทุกฝ่าย ที่เกี่ยวข้อง ไม่ว่าจะเป็นนักเรียน ผู้ปกครอง คุณครู และผู้วิจัยเอง

ขอขอบคุณสำหรับเวลาและการพิจารณาของท่าน

รุ่งรัตน์ ศรีอานวย : ผู้วิจัย

## ชื่อโครงการวิจัย

การรับรู้ของครูที่ใช้วิธี **Intensive Interaction** สอนเด็กที่มีความลำบากในการเรียนรู้ขั้นรุนแรง และเด็กออทิสติก:

ผลของการปฏิบัติเพื่อพัฒนาระบบการสอนแบบ **Intensive Interaction** ในบริบทไทย

## คำจำกัดความ **Intensive Interaction**

**Intensive Interaction (I.I.)** คือกระบวนการสอนแบบใหม่ที่เริ่มต้นที่ประเทศอังกฤษ และยังไม่เคยได้นำมาจัดตั้ง

ในประเทศไทย กระบวนการสอนมีจุดมุ่งหมายเพื่อจะพัฒนาการสื่อสารให้กับเด็กและผู้ใหญ่ ที่มีความยากลำบากในการเรียนรู้ขั้นรุนแรง และ/หรือมีอาการออทิสซึม และผู้ที่มีพัฒนาการสื่อสารอยู่ในขั้นแรก ๆ กระบวนการสอนมีพื้นฐานมาจากรูปแบบการมีปฏิสัมพันธ์ระหว่างแม่กับลูกในขวบปีแรกของชีวิต ซึ่งใช้รูปแบบการเล่นระหว่างแม่กับลูกในกระบวนการสร้างปฏิสัมพันธ์

**Intensive Interaction** เป็นรูปแบบทางการศึกษาที่เน้นเด็กเป็นผู้กำหนดทิศทางการเรียน ชนิดของการมีปฏิสัมพันธ์

เริ่มจากความพยายามสนใจเด็กจากมุมมองของเด็ก จากสิ่งที่เด็กกำลังสนใจอยู่ในขณะนั้น และจากพฤติกรรมของตัวเด็กเอง

## วัตถุประสงค์และผลจากการวิจัย

ผู้วิจัยกำลังค้นหาความรู้สึกและความคิดเห็นของผู้ใช้กระบวนการสอนแบบ **Intensive Interaction** เรื่องราวของท่าน

จะช่วยกำหนดระดับ ของความสำเร็จ ของวิธีการสอนนี้เมื่อนำมาใช้ในบริบทไทย วัตถุประสงค์ของการวิจัยเพื่อมุ่งพัฒนา

ทักษะทางอาชีพของครูผู้สอนเด็กที่มีความยากลำบากในการเรียนรู้ขั้นรุนแรง และ/หรือมีอาการออทิสซึม และเพื่อที่จะพัฒนารูปแบบการสอนแบบใหม่ที่สอดคล้องกับนโยบายการศึกษาไทย

## สิ่งที่เกิดขึ้นกับฉันเมื่อฉันเข้าร่วมในงานวิจัย

ถ้าท่านเห็นด้วยว่าจะเข้าร่วมในงานวิจัย ท่านถูกคาดหวังจะทำในสิ่งต่อไปนี้

1. ก่อนที่ท่านจะเริ่มใช้ **I.I.** ท่านจะได้รับเชิญให้เข้ารับการสัมภาษณ์เกี่ยวกับข้อมูลทั่วไป และการรับรู้ของท่านเกี่ยวกับวิธีการสอนเด็กที่มีความต้องการพิเศษและเด็กออทิสติก ช่วงเวลาการสัมภาษณ์คาดว่าจะใช้เวลา ๓๐-๕๐ นาที และจะสัมภาษณ์ที่ทำงานของท่านหลังจากโรงเรียนเลิก การสัมภาษณ์จะถูกอัดเทป
2. ระหว่างช่วง ๖ เดือนของการวิจัย ท่านถูกคาดว่าจะใช้ **I.I.** สอนเด็กนักเรียนที่ได้รับการ อนุญาตจากผู้ปกครองให้สอนด้วย **I.I.** ทุกๆ เดือนในเวลาโรงเรียน เราจะขอเยี่ยมชมการสอนของท่านกับนักเรียนผู้นั้น เพื่อที่จะแบ่งปันแลกเปลี่ยน ความรู้ และให้คำปรึกษาถ้าท่านต้องการ การเยี่ยมชมการสอนจะใช้เวลาประมาณ ๒๐-๔๐ นาที และจะเยี่ยมชมเป็นรายบุคคล
3. ทุกเดือนหลังโรงเรียนเลิก ท่านจะได้รับการสัมภาษณ์เพื่อค้นหาการรับรู้และความคิดเห็นในระหว่างการใช้ **I.I.** เวลาในการสัมภาษณ์จะใช้ประมาณ ๔๐-๕๐ นาที และการสัมภาษณ์จะถูกอัดเทป
4. ทุกเดือนในเวลาโรงเรียน ท่านถูกคาดว่าจะสามารถเข้าร่วมประชุมเชิงปฏิบัติการกับผู้เข้าร่วมวิจัยคนอื่น ๆ ได้ การประชุมจะใช้เวลาครั้งวัน ซึ่งถูกจัดขึ้นเพื่อช่วยให้ท่านได้รับความรู้เพิ่มเติม และเป็นการแลกเปลี่ยนเรียนรู้

ข้อมูลเกี่ยวกับ I.I. ร่วมกับกลุ่มผู้เข้าร่วมวิจัย สถานที่ประชุมคือ ห้องประชุมการศึกษาพิเศษ มหาวิทยาลัยราชภัฏนครราชสีมา การประชุมกลุ่มจะจัดขึ้นทั้งสิ้น ๖ ครั้ง และจะถูกบันทึกวิดีโอเทป

5. หลังจากจบโครงการวิจัย ท่านจะได้รับการขอให้ร่วมรับการสัมภาษณ์เกี่ยวกับประสบการณ์โดยรวมของการใช้ I.I. ในช่วงระหว่าง ๖ เดือนที่ผ่านมา การสัมภาษณ์จะเป็นแบบกลุ่ม ๆ ละ ๓-๔ คน แต่ละกลุ่มจะเป็นทีมงาน ที่ทำงานอยู่ในสถานที่เดียวกัน เวลาในการสัมภาษณ์จะใช้เวลา ๑-๒ ชั่วโมง และจะใช้เทปบันทึกเสียงเพื่อเก็บข้อมูล ผู้สัมภาษณ์จะเป็นผู้วิจัยจากภายนอก ซึ่งไม่เกี่ยวข้องกับมหาวิทยาลัย และกระบวนการวิจัยในช่วง ๖ เดือน การสัมภาษณ์จะใช้เทปบันทึกเสียงเพื่อเก็บข้อมูล ถ้าท่านรู้สึกไม่สบายใจที่จะพูดในกลุ่ม ผู้ร่วมวิจัยจะสัมภาษณ์ท่านเฉพาะบุคคล หลังจากการสัมภาษณ์กลุ่มเสร็จสมบูรณ์ ถ้าท่านประสงค์จะดูข้อมูลของท่านที่พูดในกลุ่ม ผู้ร่วมวิจัยจะทำการถอดเทปและมอบให้ท่านเพื่อตรวจสอบความถูกต้อง

#### **ฉันจะได้รับการจ่ายหรือไม่ถ้าเข้าร่วมการวิจัย**

ผู้เข้าร่วมการวิจัยจะได้รับค่าเดินทางครั้งละ ๒๐๐ บาท ในการประชุมเชิงปฏิบัติการทุกเดือน และการสัมภาษณ์แบบกลุ่ม ดังนั้นท่านจะได้รับค่าเดินทาง ๑,๔๐๐ บาท ผู้เข้าร่วมวิจัยทุกท่านจะได้รับอาหารว่าง และอาหารกลางวัน ในระหว่างการประชุม เชิงปฏิบัติการและการเข้ารับการสัมภาษณ์แบบกลุ่ม นอกจากนี้ผู้เข้าร่วมวิจัยที่อยู่ในโครงการตลอด ๖ เดือน จะได้รับประกาศนียบัตรรับรองว่าได้เข้าร่วมในโครงการวิจัยนี้ด้วย

#### **ประโยชน์ที่คาดว่าจะได้รับเมื่อเข้าร่วมโครงการวิจัย**

ประโยชน์ของท่านสำหรับการเข้าร่วมงานวิจัยครั้งนี้ จะเกี่ยวกับการพัฒนา ความรู้และทักษะในการสอน ที่จะเป็นประโยชน์โดยตรงต่องานของท่าน งานวิจัยนี้ไม่ได้มีจุดมุ่งหมายที่จะประเมินการสอนของท่าน ผู้วิจัยหวังที่จะใช้ข้อมูลจากการศึกษานี้เพื่อพัฒนาระบบการสอน I.I. ให้เหมาะสมมากขึ้นสำหรับการเรียนและการสอน นักเรียนที่มีความลำบากในการเรียนรู้ขั้นรุนแรงและ/ หรือเด็กที่มีอาการออทิสซึมในบริบทไทย ผู้วิจัยยังไม่เห็นความเสี่ยงใด ๆ ในโครงการนี้ ที่อาจจะเกิดขึ้นกับทั้งกับ ผู้เข้าร่วมวิจัยและกับตัวนักเรียน

#### **อะไรจะเกิดขึ้นถ้าฉันไม่ต้องการเข้าร่วมในโครงการวิจัยนี้**

ท่านไม่จำเป็นต้องเข้าร่วมในงานวิจัยนี้ และสิ่งนี้จะไม่กระทบต่อความสัมพันธ์ทั้งในปัจจุบันและในอนาคตกับผู้วิจัย และในทุก ๆ เรื่อง ถ้าท่านตัดสินใจที่จะเข้าร่วมในงานวิจัย การเข้าร่วมนี้จะเป็นแบบอาสาสมัคร ท่านมีอิสระที่จะปฏิเสธ ไม่เข้าร่วมกิจกรรมใด ๆ หรือมีสิทธิที่จะปฏิเสธไม่ตอบคำถามที่ทำให้ท่านรู้สึกไม่สบายใจ ท่านอาจจะตัดสินใจออกจากงานวิจัยเวลาใดก็ได้ โดยไม่ต้องให้เหตุผลหรือคำอธิบายใด ๆ และสิ่งนี้ก็จะไม่กระทบต่อความสัมพันธ์ระหว่างท่านกับผู้วิจัย มหาวิทยาลัย อาชีพ หรือผลประโยชน์ต่าง ๆ ถ้าท่านต้องการออกจากงานวิจัย ผู้วิจัยจะประสงค์จะขอใช้ข้อมูลที่เก็บได้ตั้งแต่ต้นจนถึงเวลาที่ท่านยุติการเข้าร่วมวิจัย แต่ข้อมูลนั้นจะรายงานในลักษณะย่อที่ไม่ได้ระบุแหล่งที่มาของตัวท่าน

#### **การเข้าร่วมในงานวิจัยของฉันจะเป็นถูกเก็บเป็นความลับหรือไม่**

ข้อมูลทุกอย่างที่เก็บได้ในช่วงการทำวิจัยจะถือเป็นความลับที่สุด อย่างไรก็ตาม ผู้วิจัยไม่สามารถรับประกันความลับของข้อมูลระหว่างการสัมภาษณ์กลุ่มที่จะเกิดขึ้นตอนท้ายของโครงการได้ ข้อมูลจะเปิดเผยในการสัมภาษณ์แบบกลุ่ม ดังนั้นถ้าท่านรู้สึกไม่สบายใจที่จะเข้าร่วมกลุ่มสัมภาษณ์ กรุณาบอกผู้วิจัย หรือผู้ร่วมวิจัยซึ่งยินดีที่จะจัดการสัมภาษณ์

เฉพาะบุคคลให้ท่าน และข้อมูลที่ท่านให้จะไม่ถูกเปิดเผย ก่อนที่จะเขียนรายงานการวิจัย คำพูดที่เราคัดลอกมาจากท่าน และการบรรยายใด ๆ ที่เกี่ยวกับท่านจะถูกส่งกลับไปให้ท่านเพื่อตรวจสอบความถูกต้องของเนื้อหา และขออนุญาตอีกครั้งชื่อของผู้เข้าร่วมวิจัยและสถานที่ที่จะถูกปกป้องโดยใช้นามสมมุติ

รายละเอียดการติดต่อ ถ้าฉันกังวลเกี่ยวกับงานวิจัย

ถ้าท่านมีความกังวลใด ๆ เกี่ยวกับการวิจัยนี้ ผู้วิจัยยินดีที่จะพูดคุยกับท่าน และจะตอบทุกคำถามอย่างสุดความสามารถ โปรดติดต่อผู้วิจัยตามหมายเลขโทรศัพท์ หรืออีเมลที่ปรากฏข้างต้น แต่ถ้าท่านยังไม่สบายใจ

ท่านสามารถติดต่อกับอาจารย์ที่ปรึกษางานวิจัยทั้ง ๒ ท่านได้ทั้ง Dr. Tina Cook at [tina.cook@unn.ac.uk](mailto:tina.cook@unn.ac.uk) or Dr. Colin Chandler at [colin.chandler@unn.ac.uk](mailto:colin.chandler@unn.ac.uk)

Tel: 0044-191- 215 6269 0 [Dr. Tina Cook]

Address: University of Northumbria at Newcastle

School of Health, Community and Education Studies,

Coach Lane Campus,

Newcastle upon Tyne, NE7 7XA

เอกสารข้อมูลเพิ่มเติมสำหรับผู้เข้าร่วมงานวิจัย

Websites: <http://www.intensiveinteraction.co.uk>

<http://www.leedsmentalhealth.nhs.uk/ldservices/intensiveinteraction.cfm>

Books on Intensive Interaction

Nind, M. and Hewett, D. (1995) 'Access to Communication: Developing the basics of communication with people with severe learning difficulties through intensive Interaction', David Fulton Publishers, London.

Nind, M. and Hewett, D. (1998) 'Interaction in Action: Reflections on the use of Intensive Interaction', David Fulton Publishers, London.

Nind, M. and Hewett, D. (2001) 'A Practical Guide to Interaction in Action', BILD Publications.

.....  
ขอขอบคุณที่ท่านให้เวลาในการอ่านเอกสารฉบับนี้ และความช่วยเหลือของท่าน ถ้าท่านยินดีที่จะเข้าร่วมในโครงการวิจัยนี้ โปรดลงนามในเอกสารฉันทานุมัติ

## Appendix VII: Consent Form for Thai Teachers with Thai Version



### CONSENT FORM FOR TEACHER

**Study Title:** Teachers' Perceptions of Intensive Interaction for Teaching Students with Severe Learning Difficulties and/or Autism: The practical application of the approach to developing practice in the Thai context.

Researcher: Rungrat Sri-amnuay

**Please tick boxes**

1. I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet dated ..... for study mentioned above. ☐
2. I have had an opportunity to discuss this study, ask questions and have received satisfactory answers to all of my questions. ☐
3. I understand that my participation in this project is voluntary and I am free to withdraw from the study: ☐
  - \* at any time
  - \* without having to give reasons
  - \* will not affect you on your current or future relationship with the researcher
  - \* without affecting your relations with the university, job, benefits, etc.
4. I understand that my involvement is strictly confidential and ☐



that no information about me will be used in any way that reveals my identity.

5. I understand that video and audio recordings will be made as part of the study; and this will not be used for any other purpose or shown to any other persons. ☐

6. I have been given a copy of the Teacher Information Sheet and a consent form for this study I have read and understood it. ☐

7. I voluntarily agree to take part in the above study. ☐

.....

**Name of teacher**

**Signature**

**Date**

Address.....

.....

Contact Tel: ..... Email: .....

I certify that I have explained to the above teacher the nature and purpose of this study, and the potential benefits and possible risks associated with participation in this study. I have answered all questions that have been raised.

.....

**Name of researcher**

**Signature**

**Date**

\_\_\_\_\_

*One copy of this form to be kept by participant, another by researcher*

## แบบนันทานุมัติสำหรับครู

### ชื่อโครงการวิจัย

การรับรู้ของครูที่ใช้วิธี Intensive Interaction สอนเด็กที่มีความลำบากในการเรียนรู้ขั้นรุนแรง  
และเด็กออทิสติก: ผลของการปฏิบัติเพื่อพัฒนาระบบการสอนแบบ Intensive Interaction ในบริบทไทย

ชื่อของผู้วิจัย นางรุ่งรัตน์ ศรีอำนวย

โปรดทำเครื่องหมาย

๑. ฉันยืนยันว่าฉันได้อ่านและเข้าใจเอกสารการให้ข้อมูลการวิจัย ☐

ที่ลงวันที่ ..... สำหรับการศึกษาข้างต้น

๒. ฉันมีโอกาสดูคำถามเกี่ยวกับกรวิจัย และได้รับความตอบ ☐

ที่พอใจในทุกคำถาม

๓. ฉันเข้าใจว่าการเข้าร่วมในโครงการวิจัยนี้เป็นแบบสมัครใจ และฉันมีสิทธิที่จะยุติ ☐

\* ในเวลาใดก็ได้

\* ไม่ต้องให้เหตุผล หรืออธิบายใด ๆ

\* จะไม่กระทบความสัมพันธ์ของฉันกับผู้วิจัยทั้งในปัจจุบันและอนาคต

\* จะไม่กระทบความสัมพันธ์ของฉันกับมหาวิทยาลัย อาชีพ ผลประโยชน์ และอื่น ๆ

๔. ฉันเข้าใจว่าการเข้าร่วมในงานวิจัยของฉันจะถูกเก็บเป็นความลับ ☐

และจะไม่มีข้อมูลใด ๆ เกี่ยวกับฉันถูกใช้ในทางที่เปิดเผยถึงตัวฉัน

๕. ฉันเข้าใจว่าการบันทึกวีดีโอเทป และโอดีโอเทป ที่จะถูกเก็บเป็นส่วนหนึ่งของ ☐

การศึกษาจะไม่ถูกนำไปใช้เพื่อจุดประสงค์อื่น หรือเปิดเผยต่อบุคคลอื่น

๖. ฉันได้รับสำเนาของเอกสารข้อมูลการวิจัย และแบบฉันทานุมัติสำหรับการวิจัยนี้ ☐

ซึ่งฉันได้อ่านและเข้าใจเรียบร้อยแล้ว

๗. ฉันยินดีที่จะเข้าร่วมโครงการงานวิจัยตามข้างต้น ☐

ชื่อของครู  ลายเซ็น  วันที่

ที่อยู่

เบอร์โทรศัพท์

อีเมล

ผู้วิจัยขอรับรองว่าได้อธิบายให้ผู้เข้าร่วมงานวิจัยได้ทราบถึงรูปแบบ และวัตถุประสงค์ของการศึกษา  
สิ่งที่คาดว่าจะได้ประโยชน์ ความเสี่ยงที่อาจเป็นไปได้ที่เกี่ยวข้องกับผู้เข้าร่วมวิจัยในการศึกษา  
และผู้วิจัยได้ตอบทุกข้อคำถามที่ถูกละทิ้ง

ชื่อผู้วิจัย  ลายเซ็น  วันที่

ผู้เข้าร่วมงานวิจัย และผู้วิจัยได้รับเอกสารนี้คนละ ๑ ฉบับ

## Appendix VIII: Information Sheet for Parent with Thai Version



University of Northumbria at Newcastle

School of Health, Community and  
Education Studies, Coach Lane  
Campus East Benton,  
Newcastle upon Tyne, NE7 7XA  
<http://northumbria.ac.uk>

### INFORMATION SHEET FOR PARENT/GUARDIAN

Date: .....

Dear Parents

Thank you for your interest in developing learning and teaching for student with severe learning difficulties and/or autism. We are interested in using a new teaching approach called Intensive Interaction (I.I.) for better developing with the Thai context. **You are being invited to allow your child to take part in the I.I. teaching program** because your child's teacher is interested in using I.I. approach for working with her/his student. The teacher is taking part in a research project being carried out by Rungrat Sri-amnuay as a PhD's thesis at University of Northumbria at Newcastle upon Tyne under the supervision of Dr Tina Cook and Dr Colin Chandler. This study has been reviewed and given favourable opinion by the Research Ethics Sub Committee to protect your safety, rights, wellbeing and dignity. The research's sponsor is The Royal Thai Government.

To help you decide whether the I.I. teaching program is a good practice for your child, this information sheet offers a complete explanation of what's involved. So please read this sheet carefully and discuss it with others if you wish to. If you have any question or would like more information, please ask me at 07805884164 or at Special Education Centre, Nakhon Ratchasima Rajabhat University (NRRU) at 044 272942 or at my email address: [rungrat.sri-amnuay@unn.ac.uk](mailto:rungrat.sri-amnuay@unn.ac.uk)

I would then be grateful if you would take time to decide whether or not you wish to allow your child to take part in the I.I. teaching program. We hope you find the program beneficial and allow your child join us.

Thank you for your time and consideration

Rungrat Sri-amnuay

### **What is Intensive Interaction?**

Intensive interaction (I.I.) is a new teaching approach originated in United Kingdom and never implemented in Thailand. This approach is to teaching the communication to children and adults who have severe learning difficulties (SLD) and/or autism and who are still at an early stage of communication development. The teaching approach is based on the model of caregiver-infant interaction in the first year and uses of caregivers' playful style in the interactive process. The style of I.I. stresses a child-directed educational model. The kind of interaction starts from trying to engage with a child from a child's perspective, from what a child is interested in, or from a child's behaviour.

### **Why are your child invited in I.I. teaching programme?**

The teacher of your child is going to be involved in a research project titled *"Teachers' Perceptions of Intensive Interaction for Teaching Students with Severe Learning Difficulties and/or Autism: The practical application of the approach to developing practice in the Thai context"*. This research is about the teacher; your child will be part of I.I. practice being taught by the teacher. She/he will be an interactive partner of her/his teacher and we are going to discuss how much your child is responding with this learning style of I.I. As a part of research project your child's response will be perceived by the teacher leading discussions to develop I.I. more appropriate for better teaching to future students.

### **What will happen to my child if he/she takes part in the I.I. teaching programme?**

If you agree to allow your child to take part in the I.I. practice, during the 6 month project your child is expected to be taught with the I.I practice. Once a month at school time I wish to visit the teacher whilst she/he is engaging with your child. I would like to observe the teacher and your child interactions, and discuss them with the teacher. I will be asking the teachers about how much your child is enjoying the I.I. practice and engaging with the I.I. process. I may give suggestions and answer any question the teacher may have about using the I.I. practice. As this research is not about the children, so I will not ask any question to your child and not call for her/him to do anything different from her/his every day lives at school. The school visit would be 20-40 minutes.

**What is the result of the study?**

The result of this study will discover the application of I.I. practice from Thai practitioners' point of views which may help us developing a new support intervention for better teaching future students with SLD and/or autism in the Thai context.

**What are the possible benefits of taking part in the I.I. teaching programme?**

The benefits to your child of this project are that your child will learn to communicate with her/his teachers who are using I.I. practice engaging with them. As I.I. is an approach that has proved beneficial to children with SLD and/or autism in other countries (Watson and Fisher 1997; Kellett 2000; Nind, 1996; Knott, 1998; Taylor and Taylor, 1998), it is anticipated that I.I. will offer a benefit to your child as an alternative intervention program for learning communication.

**What is the possible disadvantage and risk of taking part?**

I do not believe that your child is at risk of any harm from I.I. approach. Your child will be engaged in the playful and enjoyable teaching style, it is anticipated that she/he will show the sign of interest and happiness such as waiting for teacher's response, mutual turn taking, smiling and laughing. They will not be forced to engage if they try to avoid, walk away, cry or would like to do another thing. However, if you think there is any problem or harm happens, please discuss with the teachers or me directly. We will find out the solution our best.

**Does my child have to take part?**

It is up to you to decide whether or not to allow your child to take part in I.I. practice and this will not affect your child class standing and without affecting your child's relationship with her/his teachers. If you decide to allow your child to be taught with this practice, your child's involvement is voluntary. This means that you are still free to not allow your child to do any activity you feel a discomfort. You are free to withdraw him/her at any time, without giving a reason and without penalty. This will not affect your child's relations with teachers, researcher, school and benefits.

### **What do I have to do?**

If you agree to allow your child to be taught with I.I. practice, you do not need to do any special thing; please just take your child to school as much as possible. This will help your child and his/her teacher mutual interacts continually during 6 month period of this teaching practice.

### **Contact Details: For any concern about the research study.**

If you are worried about anything of this teaching programme, I will be happy to speak with you and will do my best to answer your questions. Please ask me by calling at the number provided above or e-mailing me at the above address. If you have any concern over time about the study, you may also contact either of my two supervisors: Dr. Tina Cook at [tina.cook@unn.ac.uk](mailto:tina.cook@unn.ac.uk) or Dr. Colin Chandler at [colin.chandler@unn.ac.uk](mailto:colin.chandler@unn.ac.uk)

Tel: 0044-191- 215 6269 [Dr. Tina Cook ]

Address: University of Northumbria at Newcastle upon Tyne.  
School of Health, Community and Education Studies,  
Coach Lane Campus,  
Newcastle upon Tyne, NE7 7XA

### **Further guidance for participants**

#### Websites

<http://www.intensiveinteraction.co.uk>

<http://www.leedsmentalhealth.nhs.uk/ldservices/intensiveinteraction.cfm>

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*Thank you for taking the time to read this, and for your help. To show that you have agreed, please sign the consent form.*

University of Northumbria at Newcastle

School of Health, Community and  
Education Studies, Coach Lane  
Campus East Benton,  
Newcastle upon Tyne, NE7 7XA  
<http://northumbria.ac.uk>

### เอกสารให้ข้อมูลการวิจัยสำหรับผู้ปกครอง

วันที่.....

เรียน ท่านผู้ปกครองทุกท่าน

ขอขอบคุณทุกท่านที่สนใจเกี่ยวกับการพัฒนาการเรียนและการสอนสำหรับเด็กที่มีความยากลำบากในการเรียนรู้ขั้นรุนแรงและ/หรือมีอาการออทิสซึม ผู้วิจัยกำลังสนใจวิธีการสอนแบบใหม่ที่เรียกว่า Intensive Interaction (I.I.) และต้องการจะพัฒนา วิธีการสอนนี้ในบริบทไทย **ผู้วิจัยปรารถนาจะเชิญลูกของท่านเข้าร่วมโปรแกรมการสอน** เนื่องจากครูของลูกท่านสนใจเข้าร่วมในโครงการวิจัย ที่จะใช้กระบวนการสอนแนวใหม่ (I.I.) สำหรับสอนนักเรียน คุณครูของลูกท่านกำลังเข้าร่วมงานวิจัย ระดับปริญญาเอก ที่ดำเนินโดย นางรุ่งรัตน์ ศรีอานวย ซึ่งขณะนี้กำลังศึกษาปริญญาเอกอยู่ที่ มหาวิทยาลัยนอร์ธัมเบรีย ประเทศอังกฤษ ภายใต้การให้คำปรึกษาของ Dr. Tina Cook และ Dr. Colin Chandler โครงการวิจัยได้ผ่านการตรวจสอบและให้ความเห็นชอบโดย คณะกรรมการตรวจสอบคุณธรรม และจริยธรรมของผู้วิจัยแล้ว ซึ่งจะปกป้องความปลอดภัย สวัสดิภาพ และศักดิ์ศรีความเป็นมนุษย์ของผู้เข้าร่วมงานวิจัย โครงการวิจัยได้รับการสนับสนุนจากรัฐบาลไทย ในหน่วยงานคณะกรรมการการอุดมศึกษา

เพื่อที่จะช่วยในการตัดสินใจของท่าน ว่าโครงการนี้เป็นทางเลือกการสอนที่ดีสำหรับลูกของท่านหรือไม่ เอกสารข้อมูลฉบับนี้ได้เสนอการอธิบายอย่างละเอียดของสิ่งที่เกี่ยวข้อง ดังนั้นกรุณาอ่านเอกสารนี้อย่างละเอียด และปรึกษากับบุคคลอื่น ๆ ตามที่ท่านประสงค์ ถ้าท่านมีคำถามหรือต้องการข้อมูลเพิ่มเติม กรุณาถาม ผู้วิจัยได้ที่เบอร์โทรศัพท์ 07805884164 หรือที่ศูนย์การศึกษาพิเศษ มหาวิทยาลัยราชภัฏ นครราชสีมา 044272942 หรืออีเมล: [rungrat.sri-amnuay@unn.ac.uk](mailto:rungrat.sri-amnuay@unn.ac.uk) ถ้าท่านมีคำถามหรือต้องการข้อมูลเพิ่มเติม กรุณาถามผู้วิจัยได้ที่เบอร์โทรศัพท์ 02 3951888 หรือ อีเมล [rungrat.sri-amnuay@unn.ac.uk](mailto:rungrat.sri-amnuay@unn.ac.uk)

ผู้วิจัยขอขอบคุณเป็นอย่างยิ่ง ถ้าท่านจะให้เวลาในการอ่านเอกสาร และตัดสินใจว่าสามารถจะอนุญาตให้ลูกของท่านเข้าร่วมในโปรแกรมการสอนได้หรือไม่ ผู้วิจัยหวังว่าท่านจะพบว่า โปรแกรมการสอนนี้ เป็นประโยชน์ และต้องการจะ ให้ลูกของท่าน เข้าร่วม ในโปรแกรมกับเรา

ขอขอบคุณสำหรับเวลาและการพิจารณาของท่าน

รุ่งรัตน์ ศรีอานวย



## คำจำกัดความ Intensive Interaction

Intensive Interaction คือกระบวนการสอนแบบใหม่ ที่เริ่มต้นที่ประเทศอังกฤษ และยังไม่เคยได้นำมาจัดตั้งในประเทศไทย กระบวนการสอนมีจุดมุ่งหมายเพื่อจะ พัฒนาการสื่อสารให้กับเด็กและผู้ใหญ่ ที่มีความยากลำบากในการเรียนรู้ขั้นรุนแรง และ/หรือมีอาการออทิสซึม และผู้ที่มีพัฒนาการสื่อสารอยู่ในขั้นแรกๆ กระบวนการสอนมีพื้นฐานมาจาก รูปแบบการมีปฏิสัมพันธ์ระหว่างแม่กับลูกในขวบปีแรกของชีวิต ซึ่งใช้รูปแบบ การเล่นระหว่างแม่กับลูกในกระบวนการสร้างปฏิสัมพันธ์ Intensive Interaction เป็นรูปแบบทางการศึกษาที่เน้นเด็กเป็นผู้กำหนดทิศทางการเรียน ชนิดของการมีปฏิสัมพันธ์ เริ่มจากความพยายามสนใจเด็กจากมุมมองของเด็ก จากสิ่งที่เด็กกำลังสนใจอยู่ในขณะนั้น และจากพฤติกรรมของตัวเด็กเอง

## ทำไมลูกของฉันจึงถูกเชิญให้เข้าร่วมงานวิจัย

คุณครูของคุณกำลังเข้าร่วมในงานวิจัยในหัวข้อ “การรับรู้ของคุณครูที่ใช้วิธี Intensive Interaction สอนเด็กที่มีความยากลำบากในการเรียนรู้ขั้นรุนแรง และเด็กออทิสติก: ผลของการปฏิบัติเพื่อพัฒนากระบวนการสอนแบบ Intensive Interaction ในบริบทไทย งานวิจัยนี้เกี่ยวข้องกับคุณครู ลูกของท่านจะอยู่ในส่วนของ โปรแกรมการสอน I.I. ที่คุณครูจะใช้สอนเพื่อพัฒนาการสื่อสารของคุณครู ผู้วิจัยและคุณครูจะพูดคุย เกี่ยวกับอัตราการตอบสนอง จากลูกของท่านเมื่อถูกสอนด้วยกระบวนการของ I.I. ในส่วนของงานวิจัย การตอบสนองของลูกท่าน จากมุมมองของคุณครูจะนำไปสู่การพูดคุย เพื่อที่จะพัฒนา I.I. ให้เหมาะสมมากยิ่งขึ้น สำหรับการสอนนักเรียนในอนาคต

## สิ่งที่จะเกิดขึ้นกับลูกของฉันเมื่อเขาเข้าร่วมในงานวิจัย

ถ้าท่านเห็นด้วยที่จะอนุญาตให้ลูกของท่านเข้าร่วมในโปรแกรมการสอนแบบ I.I. ในระหว่างช่วง ๖ เดือน ของโปรแกรมการสอน ลูกของท่านถูกคาดว่าจะได้รับการสอนแบบ I.I. ทุก ๆ เดือนในเวลาโรงเรียน ผู้วิจัยจะขอเข้าเยี่ยม ชมการสอนของคุณครูในขณะที่กำลังสอนลูกของท่าน ผู้วิจัยปรารถนาที่จะสังเกตการมีปฏิสัมพันธ์ทางการสื่อสารระหว่างลูกของท่านกับคุณครู และพูดคุยสิ่งเหล่านั้นกับคุณครู ผู้วิจัยจะถามคุณครูเกี่ยวกับปริมาณที่ลูกของท่าน กำลังสนใจและสนุกสนานในกระบวนการสอนแบบ I.I. และอาจจะให้คำปรึกษา และตอบ คำถาม ที่คุณครูอาจจะมีการสอนแบบ I.I. เนื่องจากงานวิจัยนี้ไม่ใช่สำหรับเด็ก ดังนั้นผู้วิจัยจะไม่ถามคำถามใด ๆ กับลูกของท่าน และจะไม่ขอให้ลูกของท่านทำสิ่งที่แตกต่างไป จากกิจวัตรประจำที่ทำในโรงเรียน การเยี่ยมชมการสอนคาดว่าจะใช้เวลาครั้งละ ๒๐-๔๐ นาที

## อะไรคือผลของการศึกษา

ผลของการศึกษาจะเปิดเผยการปฏิบัติการสอนแบบ I.I. จากมุมมองของผู้ปฏิบัติที่เป็นคนไทย ที่ซึ่งอาจจะช่วยเรา พัฒนาการกระบวนการสอน(ในระยะแรกเริ่ม) แบบใหม่ เพื่อไปสู่การสอนที่ดีกว่า สำหรับเด็กที่มีปัญหาการเรียนรู้ขั้นรุนแรง และเด็กออทิสติกในบริบทไทย

## **ประโยชน์ที่คาดว่าจะได้รับเมื่อลูกของฉันเข้าร่วมโครงการวิจัย**

ประโยชน์ของลูกของท่านที่เกี่ยวกับโปรแกรมการสอนนี้คือ ลูกของท่านจะได้เรียนรู้ที่จะสื่อสารกับคุณครู ผู้ที่จะใช้การสอนแนวใหม่ (I.I.) สร้างปฏิสัมพันธ์เพื่อส่งเสริมการสื่อสารกับลูกของท่าน เนื่องจาก I.I. เป็นกระบวนการสอนที่ได้รับการพิสูจน์จากงานวิจัยในต่างประเทศมาแล้วว่ามีประโยชน์ต่อเด็กที่มีปัญหาด้านการเรียนรู้ขั้นรุนแรง และ/หรือเด็กออทิสติก (Watson and Fisher 1997; Kellett 2000; Nind, 1996; Knott, 1998; Taylor and Taylor, 1998) ผู้วิจัยคาดว่า I.I. จะเสนอประโยชน์ ต่อลูกของท่านเสมือน เป็นโปรแกรมการ สอนทางเลือก สำหรับการสอนการสื่อสารให้กับลูกของท่าน

## **อะไรคือความเสี่ยงถ้าลูกของฉันเข้าร่วมในงานวิจัย**

ผู้วิจัยไม่เชื่อว่าลูกของท่านจะตกอยู่ในความเสี่ยงของอันตรายใด จากกระบวนการสอนแบบใหม่นี้ ลูกของท่านกำลังจะเข้าร่วมในแบบการสอนที่เป็นเกมการละเล่น และสนุกสนาน เราคาดว่าลูกของท่าน จะแสดงออกถึงความสนใจและความสุข เช่น รอคอยการตอบสนองจากครู รู้จักแลกเปลี่ยนการสื่อสาร ยิ้มและหัวเราะ เราจะไม่บังคับให้ลูกของท่านเข้าโปรแกรมการสอน ถ้าเขาพยายามที่จะหลีกเลี่ยง เดินหนี ร้องไห้ หรือต้องการทำสิ่งอื่น อย่างไรก็ตามถ้าท่านคิดว่ามีปัญหา หรืออันตรายใด ๆ เกิดขึ้น โปรดพูดคุยกับคุณครูของลูกท่าน หรือผู้วิจัยได้โดยตรง เราจะหาทางแก้ไขที่ดีที่สุด

## **ลูกของฉันจำเป็นต้องเข้าร่วมในโปรแกรมนี้อหรือไม่**

การตัดสินใจว่าจะให้ลูกของท่านเข้าร่วมในงานวิจัยหรือไม่ ขึ้นอยู่กับท่าน และไม่ว่าท่านจะตัดสินใจอย่างไร สิ่งนี้จะไม่กระทบต่อการเรียนในชั้นของลูกท่าน และจะไม่กระทบต่อความสัมพันธ์ ของลูกท่านกับ คุณครู ผู้สอนทั้งสิ้น ถ้าท่านตัดสินใจอนุญาตให้ลูกของท่านเข้าร่วมในโปรแกรมการสอน การเข้าร่วมจะเป็นแบบอาสาสมัครซึ่งหมายความว่า ท่านมีอิสระที่จะปฏิเสธไม่ให้ลูกของท่านร่วมกิจกรรมใด ๆ ที่ท่านรู้สึกไม่สบายใจ และมีสิทธิที่ให้ลูกออกจากงานวิจัยเวลาใดก็ได้ โดยไม่ต้องให้เหตุผลหรือคำอธิบายใด ๆ และสิ่งนี้ก็จะไม่กระทบต่อความสัมพันธ์ระหว่างลูกท่านกับคุณครู ผู้วิจัย โรงเรียน หรือผลประโยชน์ต่าง ๆ

## **ฉันจะต้องทำอะไรบ้างถ้าอนุญาตให้ลูกเข้าร่วมในโปรแกรมการสอน**

ถ้าท่านเห็นชอบที่จะให้ลูกของท่านเข้าร่วมในโปรแกรม ท่านไม่จำเป็นต้องทำอะไรพิเศษ เพียงแต่โปรดนำลูกของท่าน มาโรงเรียนให้มากที่สุดเท่าที่จะทำได้ สิ่งนี้จะช่วยให้ลูกของท่าน และคุณครูสร้างปฏิสัมพันธ์ทางการสื่อสารที่ดีต่อกันอย่างต่อเนื่อง ในช่วงระยะของโปรแกรมการสอนตลอด ๖ เดือน

## **รายละเอียดการติดต่อ: ถ้าฉันกังวลเกี่ยวกับโปรแกรมการสอน**

ถ้าท่านมีความกังวลใด ๆ เกี่ยวกับการโปรแกรมการสอนนี้ ผู้วิจัยยินดีที่จะพูดคุยกับท่าน และจะตอบทุกคำถาม อย่างสุดความสามารถ โปรดติดต่อผู้วิจัยตามหมายเลขโทรศัพท์ หรืออีเมลที่ปรากฏข้างต้น

แต่ถ้าท่านยังไม่สบายใจ ท่านสามารถติดต่อกับอาจารย์ที่ปรึกษางานวิจัยทั้ง ๒ ท่านได้ทั้ง Dr. Tina Cook at [tina.cook@unn.ac.uk](mailto:tina.cook@unn.ac.uk) or Dr. Colin Chandler at [colin.chandler@unn.ac.uk](mailto:colin.chandler@unn.ac.uk)

Tel: 0044-191- 215 6269 [Dr. Tina Cook ]

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Newcastle upon Tyne, NE7 7XA

เอกสารข้อมูลเพิ่มเติมสำหรับผู้เข้าร่วมงานวิจัย

Websites: <http://www.intensiveinteraction.co.uk>

<http://www.leedsmentalhealth.nhs.uk/ldservices/intensiveinteraction.cfm>

#### Books on Intensive Interaction

Nind, M. and Hewett, D. (1995) '*Access to Communication: Developing the basics of communication with people with severe learning difficulties through intensive Interaction*', David Fulton Publishers, London.

Nind, M. and Hewett, D. (1998) '*Interaction in Action: Reflections on the use of Intensive Interaction*', David Fulton Publishers, London.

Nind, M. and Hewett, D. (2001) '*A Practical Guide to Interaction in Action*', BILD Publications.

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ขอขอบคุณที่ท่านให้เวลาในการอ่านเอกสารฉบับนี้ และความช่วยเหลือของท่าน ถ้าท่านยินดีที่จะเข้าร่วมในโครงการวิจัยนี้ โปรดลงนามในเอกสารชั้นทานุมัติสำหรับผู้ปกครอง

## Appendix IX: Consent Form for Thai Teachers with Thai Version



### CONSENT FORM FOR PARENT/GUARDIAN

**Teaching Practice Title:** Intensive Interaction for teaching student with SLD and/or autism in the Thai context.

This teaching practice is a part of research study titled “Teachers’ Perceptions of Intensive Interaction for Teaching Students with Severe Learning Difficulties and/or Autism: The practical application of the approach to developing practice in the Thai context”.

Researcher: Rungrat Sri-amnuay

**Please tick boxes**

1. I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet for parent or guardian dated ..... for I.I. practice mentioned above. ☐
2. I have had an opportunity to discuss this I.I. practice, ask questions and have received satisfactory answers to all of my questions. ☐
3. I understand that my child’s participation in this I.I. practice is voluntary and I am free to withdraw my child from the study: ☐
  - \* at any time
  - \* without having to give reasons
  - \* without affecting their academic standing or relationship with their teachers and the school.

4. I understand that my child's involvement is strictly confidential and that no information about my child will be used in any way that reveals my child's identity. ☐

5. I have been given a copy of the parent/guardian information sheet and the consent form for this I.I. practice. ☐

6. I give consent to participation of my child in the above teaching practice. ☐

.....

Name of parent/guardian	signature	Date
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**Child's Details:**

Name:..... Date of Birth:.....School Year:.....

Address.....  
.....

Contact Tel: ..... Email: .....

.....

Name of teacher's student	Signature	Date
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I certify that I have explained to the above student's parent(s) or guardian the nature and purpose of this study, and the potential benefits and possible risks associated with participation in this practice. I have answered all questions that have been raised.

.....

**Name of researcher**

**Signature**

**Date**

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*One copy of this form to be kept by parent/guardian, another by researcher*

## แบบจันทานุมติสำหรับผู้ปกครอง

ชื่อของผู้วิจัย นางรุ่งรัตน์ ศรีอำนวย

### โปรดทำเครื่องหมาย

๑. ฉันยืนยันว่าฉันได้อ่านและเข้าใจเอกสารการให้ข้อมูลการวิจัยสำหรับผู้ปกครอง

☐

ที่ลงวันที่..... สำหรับการศึกษำข้างต้น

๒. ฉันมีโอกาสที่ได้ถามคำถามเกี่ยวกับการวิจัย และได้รับความตอบ

☐

ที่พอใจในทุกคำถาม

๓. ฉันเข้าใจว่าการเข้าร่วมในโครงการวิจัยนี้เป็นแบบสมัครใจ และฉันมีสิทธิที่จะให้

☐

ลูกออกจากโครงการวิจัย

\* ในเวลาใดก็ได้

\* ไม่ต้องให้เหตุผล หรืออธิบายใด ๆ

\* จะไม่กระทบต่อการเรียนของลูก และสัมพันธ์ของลูกกับคุณครูและโรงเรียน

๔. ฉันเข้าใจว่าการเข้าร่วมในงานวิจัยของลูกฉันจะถูกเก็บเป็นความลับ

☐

และจะไม่มีข้อมูลใด ๆ เกี่ยวกับลูกฉันถูกใช้ในทางที่เปิดเผยถึงตัวเด็ก

๕. ฉันเข้าใจว่าการบันทึกวิดีโอ โอดิโอ และภาพถ่าย ที่จะถูกเก็บเป็นส่วนหนึ่งของ

☐

การศึกษาจะไม่ถูกนำไปใช้เพื่อจุดประสงค์อื่น หรือเปิดเผยต่อบุคคลอื่น

๖. ฉันได้รับสำเนาของเอกสารข้อมูลการวิจัยสำหรับผู้ปกครอง และแบบ

☐

ฉันทานุมติสำหรับการวิจัยนี้ ซึ่งฉันได้อ่านและเข้าใจเรียบร้อยแล้ว

๗. ฉันยินดีที่จะอนุญาตให้ลูกของฉันเข้าร่วมโครงการงานวิจัยตามข้างต้น

☐

.....  
ชื่อของพ่อแม่ / ผู้ปกครอง

ลายเซ็น

วันที่

รายละเอียดของเด็ก

ชื่อ.....วันเกิด.....โรงเรียน.....

ห้อง.....

ที่อยู่.....

เบอร์โทรศัพท์.....

อีเมล.....

.....  
ชื่อคุณครูของเด็ก

ลายเซ็น

วันที่

ผู้วิจัยขอรับรองว่าได้อธิบายให้ผู้ปกครองได้ทราบถึงรูปแบบ และวัตถุประสงค์ของการศึกษา สิ่งที่คาดว่าจะ  
จะเป็นประโยชน์ ความเสี่ยงที่อาจเป็นไปได้ที่เกี่ยวข้องกับเด็กที่เข้าร่วมในการศึกษาวิจัย และผู้วิจัย  
ได้ตอบทุกข้อคำถามที่ถูกละทิ้งมาแล้ว

.....  
ชื่อผู้วิจัย

ลายเซ็น

วันที่

ผู้ปกครอง และผู้วิจัยได้รับเอกสารนี้คนละ ๑ ฉบับ



## **Appendix X: Outline of Semi- Structured Interview Schedule: The Baseline Perception**

### **Outline of Interview Schedule: the Baseline Perception**

#### **1. Personal Information**

Name; Age; Address and Telephone; Time of teaching career entry; Education; Present position

#### **2. Participants' perceptions at present**

##### **2.1. Perceptions of students with SLD and/or autism**

Probes:

- Could you tell me about your students?
- How you describe them as a learner?
- Do you think they are being improved from current pedagogy?

##### **2.2. Perceptions of their teaching methods**

Probes:

- Where do you see yourself in many years' time of your teaching career?
- Can you tell me about your teaching practice you use for teaching your students?
- Are there any the strengths and weaknesses of your teaching pedagogy? What? How?
- Which teaching practice do you enjoy most?

##### **2.3. Experience of teaching student with SLD and/or autism**

Probes:

- How many year have you taught students with SLD and/or autism?
- Which practice do you apply for teaching students with SLD and/or autism in your classroom? How?
- Do you think your teaching practice can improve student with SLD and/or autism? How?
- How successful of that teaching method do you feel you were?
- Are there any difficult problems with your current teaching practice for working with student with SLD and/or autism? Can you describe about that? How did you dealt with it?

## ร่างคำถามสัมภาษณ์ พื้นฐานการรับรู้เกี่ยวกับวิธีการสอน และนักเรียน

๑. ข้อมูลทั่วไป

ชื่อ; อายุ; ที่อยู่และเบอร์โทรศัพท์; ระยะเวลาการสอน; การศึกษา; ตำแหน่งในปัจจุบัน

๒. การรับรู้ของผู้เข้าร่วมวิจัยในปัจจุบัน

๒.๑. การรับรู้เกี่ยวกับนักเรียน

Probes:

- กรุณาเล่าเกี่ยวกับนักเรียนของคุณ
- คุณจะอธิบายว่าเขาเป็นผู้เรียนแบบใด
- คุณคิดว่าระบบการศึกษาในปัจจุบันสามารถพัฒนาเขาได้หรือไม่ แคไหน

๒.๒. การรับรู้เกี่ยวกับวิธีการสอนในปัจจุบัน

Probes:

- หลายปีที่ผ่านมาคุณมองอาชีพการสอนของคุณเป็นอย่างไรบ้าง
- สำหรับวิธีการสอน คุณใช้วิธีการสอนแบบใดสอนเด็กนักเรียนของคุณ
- มีจุดอ่อน และจุดแข็งอย่างไรในวิธีการสอนของคุณ
- วิธีการสอนแบบใดที่คุณชอบมากที่สุด

๒.๓. ประสบการณ์การสอนนักเรียน SLD and/or autism

Probes:

- คุณสอนนักเรียน SLD and/or autism มากี่ปีแล้ว
- คุณใช้วิธีการสอนแบบใดสอนนักเรียน SLD and/or autism ในห้องของคุณ
- คุณคิดว่าวิธีการสอนนั้นสามารถพัฒนานักเรียน SLD and/or autism ได้หรือไม่ อย่างไร
- จุดใดของวิธีการสอนนั้นที่คุณรู้สึกประสบความสำเร็จมากที่สุด
- มีปัญหาที่ยากลำบากหรือไม่ที่คุณพบในวิธีการสอนปัจจุบัน คุณอธิบายได้หรือไม่ และคุณแก้ปัญหานั้นอย่างไร

**Appendix XI: Outline of Semi- Structured Interview Schedule:  
Participants' Perceptions of Using Intensive Interaction Practice  
during the 6-month Project with Thai Version**

1. Participants' experiences in applying I.I. practice.

Probes:

- So far, how do you feel about applying I.I. practice for your student?
- What experience have you had of I.I. practice with your student?
- What do you enjoy most about this teaching practice?
- What difficulty do you feel when employing this practice? How?

2. Students' responses to I.I. practice.

Probes:

- Do you think how student feels during being taught by I.I.? How?
- How did she/he response to teaching session of I.I.?
- Is there any signs show that the student was enjoying with or did not want to engage with teaching session? How? What did you do with that situation?
- Did she/he start to communicate with you? How?
- Do you think I.I. practice facilitate relationships between you and your student? How?

3. Workplace environments and I.I. practice.

Probes:

- What do you see as important points in your workplace for supporting the continuation of I.I. practice?
- What do you see as difficult things in the continuation of I.I. practice in your workplace?

## ร่างคำถามเปิด การรับรู้ของผู้เข้าร่วมวิจัยในการใช้การสอนแบบ

### Intensive Interaction ระหว่างช่วงเวลา ๖ เดือน

๑. ประสิทธิภาพของผู้เข้าร่วมวิจัย ใช้การสอนแบบ I.I.

#### Probes:

- จนถึงขนาดนี้คุณรู้สึกอย่างไรกับการใช้ I.I.
- ประสิทธิภาพแบบใดที่คุณมีเมื่อใช้ I.I. สอนนักเรียนของคุณ
- อะไรที่คุณรู้สึกชอบมากที่สุดของวิธีการสอนแบบนี้ อย่างไร และทำไม
- คุณรู้สึกมีความยากลำบากหรือไม่เมื่อใช้วิธีการสอนนี้ อย่างไร

๒. นักเรียนตอบสนองอย่างไรต่อ I.I.

#### Probes:

- คุณคิดว่านักเรียนรู้สึกอย่างไรเมื่อถูกสอนด้วย I.I. อย่างไร
- เขาตอบสนองอย่างไรกับการสอนแบบ I.I.
- มีสัญญาณอะไรบ่งบอกว่านักเรียนกำลังสนุกเมื่อเรียนรู้แบบนี้ หรือไม่ต้องการจะได้รับการสอนแบบนี้
- เขาเริ่มสื่อสารกับคุณบ้างหรือไม่ อย่างไร
- คุณคิดว่า I.I. ช่วยเร่งความสัมพันธ์ระหว่างคุณกับนักเรียนหรือไม่

๓. สภาพแวดล้อม หรือบรรยากาศในที่ทำงานกับ I.I.

#### Probes:

- คุณเห็นว่าจุดใดที่สำคัญในที่ทำงานของคุณที่ช่วยส่งเสริมการสอนแบบ I.I. ให้ดำเนินต่อไป
- มีสิ่งใดบ้างที่คุณเห็นว่าเป็นสิ่งยากลำบากในการดำเนินการสอนแบบ I.I. ในสถานที่ทำงานของคุณ อะไร อย่างไร

## Outline of Semi-Structured Interview Schedule (adapted 2nd)

### Intensive Interaction ระหว่างช่วงเวลา ๖ เดือน

๑. ช่วงนี้คุณใช้ I.I. หรือ ไม่ ทำไม
๒. ใช้กับใครบ้าง และช่วงไหน
๓. คุณคิดว่า I.I. คืออะไร
๔. ปกติคุณเล่นกับเด็กหรือไม่
๕. คุณคิดว่าการเล่นที่คุณเคยทำมา เหมือนหรือแตกต่างจาก I.I. อย่างไร
๖. อะไรที่คุณรู้สึกชอบมากที่สุดของวิธีการสอนแบบนี้ อย่างไร และทำไม
  - คุณรู้สึกมีความยากลำบากหรือไม่เมื่อใช้วิธีการสอนนี้ อย่างไร
๗. นักเรียนตอบสนองอย่างไรต่อ I.I.

#### Probes:

- คุณคิดว่านักเรียนรู้สึกอย่างไรเมื่อถูกสอนด้วย I.I. อย่างไร
  - เขาตอบสนองอย่างไรกับการสอนแบบ I.I.
  - มีสัญญาณอะไรบ่งบอกว่านักเรียนกำลังสนุกเมื่อเรียนรู้แบบนี้หรือไม่ต้องการจะได้รับการสอนแบบนี้
  - เขาเริ่มสื่อสารกับคุณบ้างหรือไม่ อย่างไร
  - คุณคิดว่า I.I. ช่วยเร่งความสัมพันธ์ระหว่างคุณกับนักเรียนหรือไม่
๓. สภาพแวดล้อม หรือบรรยากาศในที่ทำงานกับ I.I.

#### Probes:

- คุณเห็นว่าจุดใดที่สำคัญในที่ทำงานของคุณที่ช่วยส่งเสริมการสอนแบบ I.I. ให้ดำเนินต่อไป
- มีสิ่งใดบ้างที่คุณเห็นว่าเป็นสิ่งยากลำบากในการดำเนินการสอนแบบ I.I. ในสถานที่ทำงานของคุณ อะไร อย่างไร

## **Appendix XII: Outline of the Focus Group Interview Schedule: Participants' Perceptions of Using Intensive Interaction Practice at the End of the 6-month Project with Thai version**

Objective 1: To explore if I.I. approach can develop teachers' approach to teaching.

Main Questions:

1. Overall, what has been your experience with this teaching practice - Intensive Interaction?

Probe:

1.1. If there is someone interested in this teaching practice, what will you say about it?

1.1.1 In your opinion, what is I.I.?

1.1.2. What are the same and difference between I.I. and you previous teaching methods?

1.2. What is the most favourite and least-liked aspect of the use of this practice?

1.3. What changes in your teaching practice or style, if any, have you feel over the time while you use I.I.? What and How?

1.4. How do you feel to the changes of your teaching practice?

Objective 2: To evaluate how Thai teachers perceive I.I. as an approach to work with student with SLD and/or autism.

Main Questions:

2. How do you feel when use this teaching approach working with your students? (Confident, somewhat hard, too hard / success, satisfied, moderate, not satisfied). What and How?

Probes:

2.1. How do you feel during your student is being approached by I.I.? How?

2.2. Do you think how student feels during being taught by I.I.? How?

2.3. So far, do you think student is making any progress about communication skills? How?

2.4. Do you feel I.I. helps student communicate? How?

Objective 3: To identify key factors in Thai context that influences the adoption of I.I. approach in Thailand.

Main Questions:

3.1 What do you see as important points in supporting the continuation of I.I. practice? (Principle of I.I. and environment in workplace)

3.2 Are there any things you feel so hard for working with I.I. that you do not wish to continue working with this teaching practice? (principle of II and environment in work place).

Probes:

3.3 After completing of this research project, do you think you will keep working with this teaching practice? Why?

## ร่างคำถามการสัมภาษณ์แบบกลุ่ม

ข้อ ๑ จุดประสงค์: เพื่อจะประเมินว่ากระบวนการสอนแบบ I.I. สามารถพัฒนาวิธีการสอนการสื่อสารของผู้เข้าร่วมในงานวิจัยได้หรือไม่

คำถามหลัก

๑. โดยรวมทั่วไปแล้ว อะไรคือประสบการณ์ของคุณจากการใช้กระบวนการสอนแบบ I.I.

Probe:

๑.๑ ถ้ามีคนสนใจในวิธีการสอนนี้ คุณจะพูดถึงวิธีการสอนนี้ว่าอย่างไร

๑.๑.๑ ในความคิดเห็นของคุณ I.I. คืออะไร

๑.๑.๒ อะไรคือความเหมือนและความแตกต่างระหว่าง I.I. และวิธีการสอนก่อนหน้านี้นี้ของคุณ

๑.๒ อะไรคือด้านที่คุณชอบมากที่สุด และด้านที่ไม่ชอบมากที่สุดของการใช้กระบวนการสอนนี้

ข้อ ๒ จุดประสงค์: เพื่อที่จะค้นหาว่า I.I. ถูกมองเป็นเหมือนรูปแบบการสอนที่เหมาะสมสำหรับสอนนักเรียน SLD and/or autism หรือไม่

คำถามหลัก

๒. คุณรู้สึกอย่างไรเมื่อใช้กระบวนการสอนนี้ทำงานกับนักเรียนของคุณ

(มั่นใจ ค่อนข้างยาก ยากมาก / ประสบความสำเร็จ พอใจ ปานกลาง ไม่พอใจ)

อะไร และอย่างไร

Probes:

๒.๑ คุณรู้สึกอย่างไรระหว่างที่นักเรียนถูกสอนด้วย I.I. อย่างไร

๒.๒ คุณคิดว่านักเรียนรู้สึกอย่างไรเมื่อได้รับการสอนแบบ I.I. อย่างไร

๒.๓ จนถึงขณะนี้ คุณคิดว่านักเรียนของคุณมีความก้าวหน้าในทักษะการสื่อสารหรือไม่ อย่างไร

๒.๔ คุณรู้สึกว่า I.I. ช่วยให้นักเรียนสื่อสารหรือไม่



ข้อ ๓ จุดประสงค์: เพื่อที่จะค้นหาว่ามีอะไรเป็นปัจจัยที่สำคัญในบริบทไทยที่มีอิทธิพล หรือส่งผลกระทบต่อการใช้ I.I. ในกลุ่มผู้เข้าร่วมวิจัย

คำถามหลัก

๓. อะไรที่คุณเห็นว่าเป็นจุดที่สำคัญในการสนับสนุนความต่อเนื่องของการสอนแบบ I.I. (เนื้อหาของ I.I. และสภาพแวดล้อมของการทำงาน)

Probes:

๓.๑ มีสิ่งใดบ้างที่คุณรู้สึกยากลำบากในการสอนด้วย I.I. จนไม่ต้องการจะสอนด้วยวิธีนี้ต่อไป (เนื้อหาของ I.I. และสภาพแวดล้อมของการทำงาน)

๓.๒ เมื่อจบโครงการวิจัยนี้ คุณคิดว่า คุณจะยังคงใช้วิธีการสอนนี้สอน เด็กนักเรียนของคุณต่อไปหรือไม่ ทำไม

## Appendix XIII: Outline of the Observation Schedule

### 1. Applying Elements of the Intensive Interaction Practices of Participants in Student-Teacher Interactions.

- Enjoying being with the learner
- Using contingent response
- Using behavioural mirroring
- Using facial expressions
- Using eye contact
- Using vocalizations
- Using turn taking
- Using physical contacts
- Using intentionality
- Using joint focus activity

Source: Nind and Hewett (2005) 'How knowledge of infant learning helped the development of Intensive Interaction' (p. 42-74)

### 2. Workplace Environment Factors

- The signals and feelings of the others (colleagues and directors of participants) about the participants' implementations of the I.I. practice in each research setting.
- Physical environment (comfortable furniture; quiet space or room where student-teacher interactions can interaction without interruption.

## ร่างแบบสังเกตการณ์ในโรงเรียน

1. การใช้องค์ประกอบของวิธีการสอนแบบ I.I. ของผู้ถูกวิจัยในระหว่างการทำปฏิสัมพันธ์กับนักเรียนของตน

- การรู้สึกสนุกสนานที่ได้อยู่กับผู้เรียน
- การตอบสนองตามพฤติกรรมที่เปลี่ยนแปลงไปของผู้เรียน
- การใช้พฤติกรรมการตอบสนองเลียนแบบ
- การใช้การแสดงออกทางสีหน้า
- การใช้การแสดงออกทางสายตา
- การใช้เสียง
- การใช้การสลับสับเปลี่ยน
- การใช้สัมผัสทางกาย
- การใช้การตอบสนองต่อการสื่อสารของเด็กแบบตั้งใจ
- การใช้กิจกรรมที่เน้นการสนุกสนานร่วมกัน

2. ปัจจัยทางสภาพแวดล้อมการทำงาน

- สัญญาณและความรู้สึกของบุคคลอื่น ๆ เช่น เพื่อนผู้ร่วมงานของผู้ที่ถูกวิจัย และผู้อำนวยการเกี่ยวกับการใช้ I.I. ของครูในแต่ละสถานที่วิจัย
- สภาพแวดล้อมทางกายภาพ เช่น เฟอร์นิเจอร์ที่สบาย ๆ มุมหรือห้องที่เงียบ ๆ ที่ครูและนักเรียนสามารถจะมีปฏิสัมพันธ์กันโดยปราศจากการรบกวน

## Appendix XIV: Pictures of Research Sites and Activities Conducted in this Research.

### Three Research Sites



Special Education Centre at  
Rajabhat Nakonratchasima University



Special Education Centre Region 11



Muang Nakonratchasima School

## Two-Day Intensive Interaction Training Course







## Intensive Interaction Workshops





## Intensive Interaction Sessions





**Focus groups and individual interviews  
conducted by the research assistant**

